new masses

A WORLD "CHRISTIAN FRONT"?

by V. J. Jerome

THE LAUGHTER OF SHOLEM ALEICHEM

by Nathan Ausubel

READING THE POLITICAL BAROMETER

by A. B. Magil

NOVEMBER 26, 1946

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just a minute

SOME eight months ago a handful of veterans, writers by profession, felt that one of the prime requirements for an anti-fascist world was an organization of tough-minded writers that would fight the American equivalent of the military force they helped knock over in Europe and in the Pacific. Accordingly they organized the Contemporary Writers. Today, 200 strong, it has just announced that it is taking permanent headquarters in the Hotel Albert in New York, together with the Peoples' Radio Foundation. This hotel, on University and 11th, on the fringes of Greenwich Village, was a famous literary center several decades ago, and if the program of the Contemporary Writers is even partially realized, it will again be a center of writers' activities.

NM has followed the growth of this organization with close interest, not only because several of its members appear in our pages (Howard Fast, Thomas McGrath, Arnaud D'Usseau, Jules A. Wein, Ben Field, Milton Blau, Arthur Gregor, Sidney Finkelstein, Alan Stoltman, Walter McElroy and Lucille Boehm), but also because we know that we must encourage such groups in the face of the seemingly overwhelming power of the slick journals, the honey centers of Hollywood, the towering interests of the Luce type of combine, etc. Groups such as CW, remaining intact and unyielding, must in time become infinitely more eloquent and powerful than the writers doing time in the silk-lined pits of the money men—writers who, in varying form, finally come to reiterate the corrupt and enslaving sentiments of their masters.

Many an honorable group has foundered because its working program never quite caught up to its intentions. Fortunately, Contemporary Writers has overcome that danger. Its working program makes it the focus for all young anti-fascist writers looking for a place to go. It has in operation at the present moment some twelve workshops in poetry, the novel, the short story and drama. It conducts monthly forums on literature and politics and publishes a monthly paper called *Contemporary Guide*.

The aim of these workshops and forums is not only to give the writer a platform for his ideas, but also to develop in the young writer, groping for intellectual and emotional adjustment, a true understanding of the social forces around him. For the writer to understand these forces is to conquer them and to conquer them is to emancipate himself as a creative worker. The flourishing state of CW's program is reflected in the fact that no less than eighteen novels are in progress in the workshops; several have been accepted for publication. In addition, about twenty young Negro writers from Harlem have given up their own independent workshop program to join with that of Contemporary Writers.

CW plans to enlarge on a national scale in the near future. Toward that end it has already set up a chapter of thirty-five writers in Boston, and is sending a field representative to Chicago. Anticipating a growing conflict with capitalist ideologues and a possible increasing reluctance on the part of publishers to cooperate, CW is including in its plans the possibility of setting up its own publishing house.

CW forums, exploring the sources of conflict for the developing writer, have to date discussed such subjects as the character of the Negro in literature, the historian as writer, international issues and the creative writer, evaluation of the short story, etc.

It is, of course, quite clear by this time that CW is a purposeful group that intends to defend the honest writer and his position against all the forces of dishonesty. But they have also asked us to say that for all their seriousness, they occasionally—meaning every week—intend to dunk their bread into some wine. So beginning November 23, at the Hotel Albert, they are presenting Chapter One in their series of social affairs. If you want information concerning this or any other activity, get in touch with Contemporary Writers, P. O. Box 197, Station D, N. Y. C., or at the Hotel Albert.

J. F.

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A WORLD "CHRISTIAN FRONT"?

The spiritual atom bomb now being tested in the Vatican Bikini menaces world peace and democracy.

By V. J. JEROME

IN THE course of a series of articles entitled "Can Protestantism Win America?" published in the inter-denominational *Christian Century* from April to July of this year, the editor, Dr. Charles Clayton Morrison, noted the danger to American Protestantism from the increased Catholic incursions into the national life. Dr. Morrison warned: "The aggressive activity of Catholicism should provide Protestantism with a reinforcing incentive to arouse itself, to throw off the illusion that it still holds the predominant position in American society. . . ." (*Christian Century*, May 8.)

The Catholic hierarchy is advancing its evangelism and stretching out its political tentacles with a boldness and militancy unprecedented in American history. Controlling 23,000,000 enrolled members as against the 43,000,000 million Protestants, the hierarchy presumes to act almost in the manner of the leadership of the established religion of the land, increasingly penetrating political and cultural life with a reactionary influence that is often decisive in matters of domestic and foreign political significance.

Many Protestant leaders share, in varying degrees, the alarm of Dr. Morrison. This was evidenced most clearly in the widely representative protest against continuing Myron Taylor as presidential representative to the Vatican. However, a number of Protestant notables have come to the aid of the Vatican. Thus the Rev. Dr. Donald Bridges, moderator of the General Council of the Congregational Christian Churches, publicly declared: "If the Kingdom of God is to be advanced, we Protestants must help our Catholic brothers, not hinder them in the great enterprise." (New York *Times*, June 19, 1946.)

Likewise Dr. Everett R. Clinchy, president of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, on July 9 deplored Protestant protests against the appointment of Taylor to the Vatican.

The climax of this policy was the proposal of the international conference of church leaders sponsored by the World Council of Churches, held at Cambridge University, August 4 to 8, for a united front with the Vatican. The anti-Soviet basis for that Protestant-Vatican "understanding at the highest level" was provided in the keynote statements by the chairman, John Foster Dulles, reactionary spokesman for big business and a major Hoover-Republican figure. This powerful Protestant layman represents in himself the transmission belt between finance capital and Protestant clerical reaction. It is significant that the New York *Times* immediately published a sanctimonious editorial fully backing Dulles' proposals with all its implications (August 5, 1946).

Objections from Protestant circles to the ultra-reactionary Dulles position were not expressed with decisive weight. One prompt retort came from Kenneth Leslie, editor of *The Protestant*, who, according to the press of August 6, cabled a demand that Dulles resign as chairman of the Cambridge conference "to save us from the embarrassment of your false leadership."

Notable, too, was the opposition voiced by the presiding bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church, Henry St. George Tucker, who stated in his reply to an inquiry sent out to a number of churchmen by *The Witness*, Episcopal Church organ: "I would disapprove our joining with the Vatican or any other group in an anti-Russian campaign."

On the other hand, the *Christian Advocate*, official organ of the Methodist Church, editorially (August 22) welcomed the united front offer to the Vatican as presenting it with "one of the greatest spiritual opportunities in all its centuries-long history." Similar endorsement came a few days later from one of the participants in the Cambridge conference, Dr. Henry Smith Leiper, US executive of the World Council of Churches and one of the top figures in the Federal Council of Churches (New York *Herald Tribune*, August 27).

A considerable section of American Protestantism was not receptive to the proposal, however, despite the absence of many clear-cut public expressions of opposition. Hence Dr. Walter W. Van Kirk, one of the secretaries of the Cambridge conference and the man who had released the original unity proposal to the press, felt compelled to issue a tardy and lame "clarification" to the effect that the reported Protestant-Vatican " 'understanding at the highest level' was not acted upon by the Cambridge conference" (New York *Times*, August 30).

This statement is unquestionably an admission of the difficulties besetting the Dulles plan. Yet can we take Dr. Van Kirk's declaration entirely at face value?

It would be the sheerest naivete to assume that the Dulles camp will slacken its efforts to make of the Protestant churches a Vatican-tied instrument of imperialism's anti-Soviet drive. It is significant that in a supplementing analysis of the *Text of the Statement Adopted by the Cambridge Conference* (issued by the World Council of Churches) Dr. Leiper, while reporting that "no new action was taken with respect to relations with the Ro-

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man Church," holds out the prospect of "a strong disposition to find ways in which Christian convictions, whether Roman or non-Roman, shall find at least parallel expression where common action is for any reason impossible."

It would be equally fatuous to take at face value the reported rejection by the Pope of the proffered Protestant-Vatican collaboration. A Rome dispatch reported the Vatican, through its official newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano*, to have rejected "any organic union with Protestantism in order to form a world Christian front": "Jesus Christ founded the 'Church,' not 'the churches and the World Council of them,'" it said (New York *Herald Tribune*, September 12).

This inveterate Papal arrogance will, of course, deceive no thinking person. More important is the reference in the dispatch to the rejection of "any organic union with Protestantism." The Cambridge conference proposed no organic union; the offer, according to the press, was one of united action. In the reported declination by the Vatican, it should therefore be noted, what is rejected is not "a world Christian front" but an organic union that was not projected in the proposal.

There is significance in the exuberance of the clerico-fascist Brooklyn *Tablet* which, on August 10, hailed the united front proposal with an editorial captioned, "Going Our Way?"

THE world Christian front sought by Dulles, the "Protestant layman," at the Cambridge conference—and after—is but a religious reserve force of the world imperialist front co-sponsored by Dulles, the brain-truster of atomic diplomacy. We have Gov. Dewey as authority (in a speech delivered in New York on Sept. 15) for the fact that Dulles jointly with himself and Senator Vandenberg was really responsible for the Truman-Byrnes "get-tough-with-Russia" war policy. And we have from the former Democratic National Chairman, James A. Farley, the proud revelation that in an interview with Pope Pius XII on September 25 he found the Pontiff "thoroughly in accord with the firm American policy" (New York *Sun*, September 26—AP dispatch from Rome).

The Vatican and its collaborationists in the Protestant midst are bent on establishing a "world Christian front" which is drawing together forces of ultra-reaction, feudal remnants, fascists and bellicose imperialists in a twentieth-century crusade against the "infidel"—the Soviet Union and every nation that has taken an anti-imperialist course. This "world Christian front" is projected under the leadership of the Pope of Rome, who is systematically being groomed as the spokesman for all Christendom.

The theory underlying this propaganda is the conception that the historic schism which took place in the middle of the sixteenth century at the Council of Trent between Protestantism and Catholicism is now being healed.

The turning of the Vatican to the United States as its main pillar of support is interpreted as proof of this conception.* And the reciprocity displayed by our administration toward the Vatican, as expressed in the continued American ambassadorship to the Roman See, contributes to this propoganda.

FOR Marxists, this poses a question in theory. What is the explanation of this deliberate effort toward an ever-closer alliance between the strongest modern capitalist power, American imperialism, and that church institution, the Vatican, which was the religious mainstay of the feudal system?

It is a fundamental of Marxism that the economic structure of a given society brings into being corresponding superstructures in religion, as well as in the political, juridical and cultural forms of thought and their institutional expressions. The Church of Rome was the twin component with the nobility of the upper feudal Estates. It would be a mistake, of course, to oversimplify the place of the Catholic Church in the feudal order as purely a religious superstructural institution. Through its tremendous ownership of land and monasteries; through its collection of tithes, dues, fees and Peter's Pence which flowed to Rome, the Church acquired the economic and political character of a powerful and dominant vested interest in the feudal system. It was against those two ruling Estates that the Third Estate, led by the bourgeoisie, took the path of revolution. The classic movement of the bourgeoise toward political ascendancy involved necessarily revolutionary struggle against the tenets and the sway of the Church of Rome. The Protestant Reformation, in breaking the barriers which the authority of the Church of Rome had built in the way of the new economic forces developing within the feudal system itself, helped free the path for the rise of capitalism.

How is it, then, that today the bourgeoisie bolsters the very Church it fought in the course of its struggle for power?

The bourgeoisie in the epoch of its decline, as Lenin established in his *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, finds itself compelled by the intensely aggravated contradictions and irrationalities of its system to turn its back on its early revolutionary and progressive assumptions and to utilize doctrines and philosophies which, though couched in "modern" terminology, are rooted in the mysticism of pre-capitalist modes of production. Thus, the field of philosophy is turned over to irrationalists, intuitionists, neo-Thomists, as well as verbal tricksters comprising all the positivist schools. Fascism, with its entire storage-house of medieval obscurantism and barbarized "science," is the abyss of this reversion to the old. Capitalism, having in its parasitic, monopoly stage lost its earlier historically progressive features, looks for "spiritual" weapons in superstructural forms —secular and religious — that are themselves most reactionary and anti-historical.

The attitude of imperialist America to the Church of Rome eminently illustrates this theoretical point.*

By the dialectic of history the bourgeoisie, which was once impelled to end the sway of the church that was wedded in interest and ideology to the feudal agrarian system, now seeks to stem the tide of the historically progressive forces of today by entering into an alliance of mutual defense with that church.

THE process by which the capitalist class negated its previous hostile attitude to the Vatican began far back. It began, in fact, as soon as the erstwhile revolutionary bourgeoisie felt the

* Thus, the Luce-owned *Time* (February 25) interpreted this unprecedented stage in Vatican-US relations as "the greatest reorientation in Church policy since the Council of Trent."

* An examination of the Vatican's doctrinal content itself and its philosophic basis would show why imperialism considers the Vatican an indispensable ally in its drive for world domination. But this is beyond the scope of the present article.

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first threat from below, from its plebeian allies against feudalism. The French bourgeoisie of the early nineteenth century, for example, abandoned the militant anti-clericalism of the Jacobins in the French Revolution and restored the power of the hierarchy, to which it turned for help against the revolutionary masses.

In the United States, as the Beards point out, the "spectacular growth of Catholicism" in the decades immediately following the Civil War" was really welcome to many Americans of colonial descent who were now recoiling before the advance of radical ideas and scientific thinking. Priests of the Catholic denominations were found in practice to have, as a rule, a moderating influence on strikers and labor agitators; and often a Protestant capitalist, such for example as James J. Hill, looked to the Catholic hierarchy for support in the maintenance of law and order."*

In the epoch of imperialism, and especially of the general crisis of capitalism, when democratic forces are surging forward, the dialectical process is completed. The bourgeoisie now seeks a full-scale and permanent alliance with the Vatican in the offensive of reaction and fascism. The alliance is facilitated by the fact that the Vatican, with its feudal doctrine, is proved master at adjusting its mien and policy to the mutations in relationships within the capitalist world wherever and whenever it deems it expedient. This tendency toward adjustment manifested itself early in the history of capitalism when the Church, as owner of great material wealth, became enmeshed in the financial and trading processes of the new system with resultant "harmonizations" of its eternal doctrine to changing reality. Today the Vatican, with its vast ownership of landed estates and its finance-capitalist ramifications, can be both prop to feudalism in some countries and prop to imperialism in others.*

This coalition but reflects in the religious field the general political alliance of the most reactionary section of the imperialist ruling class with feudal remnants in an entire series of countries whose development has been retarded by imperialism. This alliance is directed at preventing the long overdue bourgeois-democratic revolution, the consummation of which would eliminate those countries as agricultural hinterlands of finance capital. Salient examples, with variations in level, are China, Latin America, and a number of countries in Central and Eastern Europe. In all such spheres the coalition between imperialism and the various reactionary feudal elements has in the Vatican a strong cementing force.

The above-cited tendency of Protestant capitalists to look to the Catholic hierarchy for support against "radical ideas and scientific thinking" in the post-Civil War stage is tremendously intensified today. Hence, the ever-greater role of the Wall Street layman, John Foster Dulles, in the innermost councils of Protestantism.**

The hand of Dulles is seen in the "Statement on Soviet-American Relations" adopted on October 11 by the Executive Committee of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. The statement was submitted by the Commission on a Just and Durable Peace, of which Dulles is chairman.

The statement sums up its program

* Charles A. and Mary R. Beard, *The Rise of American Civilization* (rev. ed., 1933, Vol. II, p. 409).

* Of the countless illustrations that might be cited there comes to mind the recent adjustment to imperialist power politics in the departure from the 600-year-long practice of maintaining an Italian majority in the College of Cardinals.

** John Foster Dulles, together with Henry R. Luce, has been added to the Board of Directors of Union Theological Seminary. Dr. Van Dusen, the new president of the Seminary, has abandoned its liberal tradition and blossomed forth as an editorial writer for *Life* magazine on September 2, urging aid to Chiang Kai-Shek's civil war on China in the name of an anti-Soviet-US foreign policy.

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with a series of salient points of which these are the foremost:

"1. The elimination internationally of methods of intolerance which make it impossible for conflicting beliefs to subsist and be propagated in the world consistently with peace.

"2. The elimination from United States' national policy of certain prejudices and practices which unnecessarily create tension.

"3. Cooperation of the American and Russian people at the scientific, economic, cultural and religious levels and cooperation of the United States government with the government of the Soviet Union in the curative and creative tasks envisaged for the United Nations."

These points, especially the third, show the influence of progressive Protestants who have been able to take a stand against reactionary fellow-Protestants and at least force them to compromise. They must be seen as reflecting the resentment against the imperialist manifesto proclaimed by Byrnes in Stuttgart. In this sense the statement is constructive and worthy of support as favorable to friendly relations with the Soviet Union in the interest of peace.

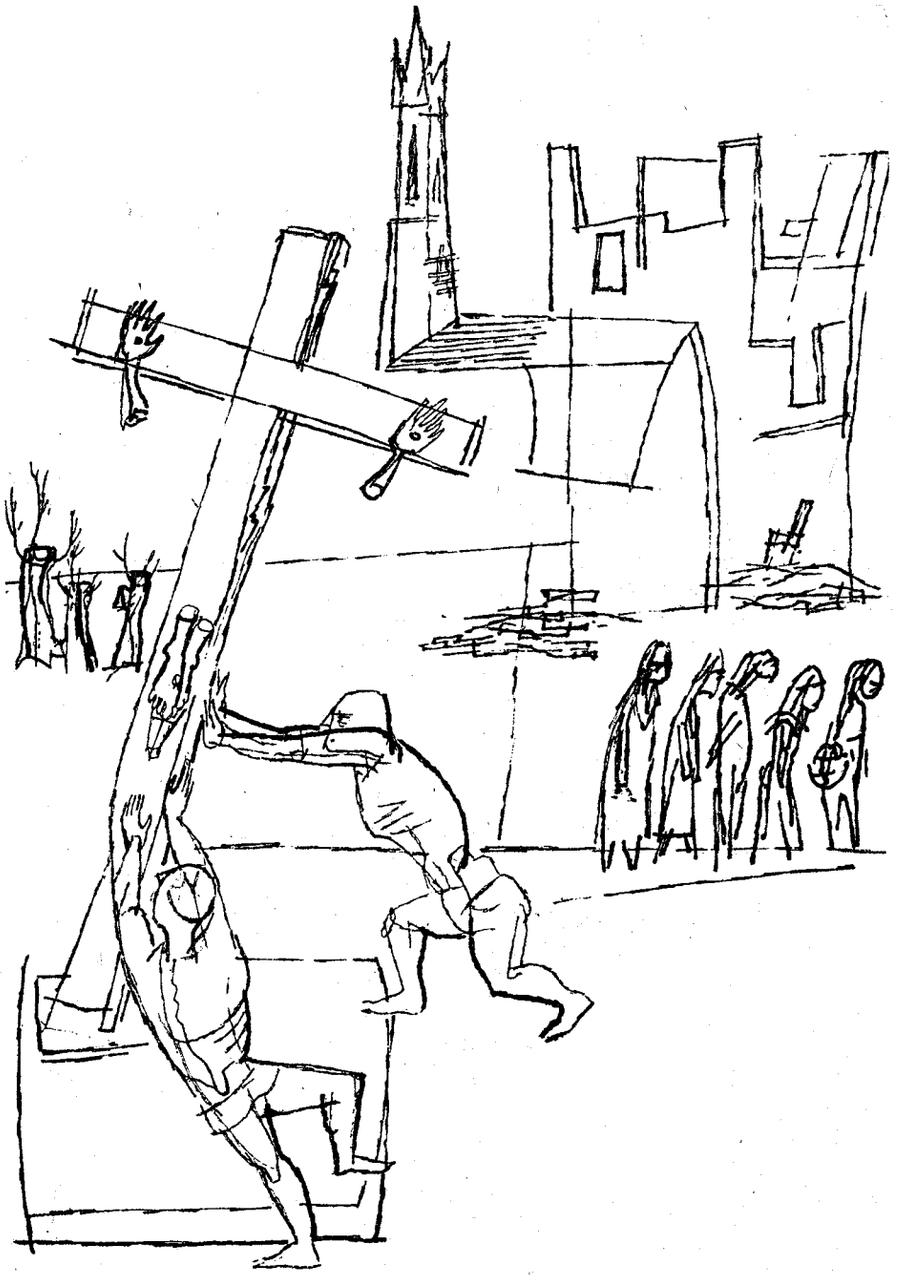
But the contradictory nature of the statement is evident where the hand of Dulles and his reactionary supporters is clearly revealed. This is particularly so in the first part, wherein is advanced the thesis—or text, it might almost be termed—that presents a picture of an ideological chasm between the United States and the Soviet Union (with the Soviet side as the land of "disregard of the sacredness of personality which is fundamental in Christianity") such as one must despair of ever spanning with the bridge of friendship and cooperation between the two countries.

The Dulles hand is further evident in another juxtaposition. When the statement directs at the Soviet Union the words that "Christians . . . cannot condone the purges wrought upon newly acquired peoples or the taking from these peoples of political, intellectual and religious liberty," the ear need not be strained to detect in this language of church ministers an echo of certain cabinet ministers in the assembly of the United Nations.

Of the United States the document declares: "The American nation knows the methods of tolerance. Our people have used that method—even though imperfectly—for 160 years. . . . They are equipped by experience to explain, and by faith to persuade." Corroboration was not sought from the peoples of Cuba, Mexico, Nicaragua, Haiti, the Phillipines, Puerto Rico, China, the Soviet Union (with memories of American interventionist armies), or from the Negro people.

But it is also clear that progressive Protestants have participated in the statement, taking it in part out of the hands of reaction. The voice of the progressive Protestants comes through in the basic insistence "that it is possible for irreconcilable and dynamic beliefs to subsist side by side in peace." In its closing paragraphs the statement calls on Protestant Christians "to diagnose the true nature of the present problem and to see how it can be solved." The absence of any reference to a Protestant-Vatican coalition must be seen as a setback to the Dulles forces.

Taken as a whole, in its final form the statement appears as a compromise between the Dulles forces and the progressive elements within the Protestant churches.



Shirley Venit.

MONOPOLY capitalism fears the growing role of the working class and all other democratic forces today. This fear is registered by influential church leaders in ther ex-

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pressed alarm at the "gains of secularism."

In a pamphlet recently issued by the American Office of the World Council of Churches, the Council's General Secretary, Dr. Visser 't Hooft, in discussing the problem of postwar reconstruction facing the churches in Europe, points to the war-produced "landslide in society" in which three factors are to be noted: "(1) the bankruptcy and collapse of the bourgeoisie in many countries; (2) the manifestation of the preponderant role of the workers in modern society; (3) the new prestige of communism."

In the United States alarm was prominently voiced recently in the *Christian Century* articles already cited. An important factor in the "gains of secularism," Dr. Morrison says, is "the emergence of organized labor": "This phenomenal development has drawn the great mass of industrial workers into a powerful solidarity whose purpose is to secure the rights and justice denied them under an economic system with which they had previously dealt with merely as individuals. The class consciousness generated by this development presents a massive bloc of mentality which Protestantism, *traditionally limited by a bourgeois outlook,* and lacking any corporate embodiment of its own strength, finds it difficult to penetrate." (May 15th issue; italics mine, V.J.J.)

Imperialism regards the hold of the Vatican on the Catholic masses today as a major social base and mobilizing agency for rallying millions to finance capital's policy of ultra-reaction and preparation for World War III.

It is true that the main social support of imperialism is the influence of Social-Democracy in the ranks of the working class. Therefore, the bolstering of Social-Democracy has become a central part of the general strategy of reestablishing the domination of monopoly capital throughout Europe. But this policy confronts insurmountable obstacles in the mass disillusionment in Social-Democratism and in the growing urge among the Social-Democratic workers to unity with the Communists, which is exemplified today notably in Italy and France. Therefore, the Vatican and the Catholic hierarchy assume increasingly greater importance as a social prop of imperialism.

Between the Vatican and imperialism the motives are mutual and the historic compulsions parallel. The general weakening of the positions of world capitalism as a consequence of World War II forces imperialism to pursue desperate policies to maintain its system. Likewise, in a series of European countries the Vatican has been greatly weakened in political power and economic mainstay, which were interrelated with the sway of semi-feudal landowners and quisling monopolists. This is the foundation of the alliance between finance capital and the Vatican.

IN THIS direct alliance with imperialism the Vatican and the Catholic hierarchy everywhere resort to flagrant political interference in international and national affairs.

This phenomenon needs, however, to be seen in its two-fold aspect. Along with the political encroachments which bespeak brazenness and power, we must simultaneously recognize the critical weaknesses that cause the Vatican to bare the political blade concealed within the "spiritual" sheath.

The Vatican knows that it can best serve the imperialist drive against the Soviet Union and the new peoples' democracies by acting as imperialism's "spiritual" arm which accords apostolic benediction to the atom bomb. Its recourse to open political activity, notwithstanding its boldness and arrogance, is in reality a confession of panic, of fear for the future of the capitalist base of its own present existence. Hence the continued denials and the jesuitical attempts to explain away the Pope's or the hierarchy's meddling in politics as a religious function.

The Vatican and the hierarchy well know how to rationalize their manifest political interference. The more flagrant their invasion of politics, the more crafty will be the "spiritual" justifications. Not politics, but morality, we are told, motivated the Pope's interference in the Italian and French elections and referenda. And since voting is a moral responsibility, it was apparently within his domain to order the Catholic masses to vote on the side of reaction.

Likewise, the world is asked to believe, considerations not of politics but of moral justice impelled the Vatican to pronounce excommunications against all Yugoslav citizens who contributed to the meting out of the people's justice to the Axis-collaborator Stepinac—*political* traitor in archbishop's vestments. And considerations of moral

PARIS RECALLED

Scampering with kernels of time between unsteady claws
Memory strips the past of what precious stores it hides.
Sweet Paris, so often tumbled through the mind, is turned
And turned and chewed and dried—emptied like the shell
Of Sacre-Coeur.

The Concord fountains grow dim,
The crowded trains squeal into oblivion,
The Vendome stretches thin:
Until the variable closets of the mind
Echo not the great names of the Squares
Nor of the monuments but of those proud men
Who built in the dark with the fingers of their heart
A new city, a Paris where the sparrows find bread
Beneath the trees.

The grey squirrel, hustling, scattering claws, rattles the doors inside,
Drops Paris in the dim alcove where the dust settles. Yet a single street
Remains burning its name across the tragic ashes of a thousand roads;
Once called Saint Ouen, the road to the workers' quarter now reads
By this light and in this time—
Gabriel Peri.

MILTON BLAU.

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justice no doubt brought Cardinal Hlond to justify the Kielce pogrom organized by fascist *political* enemies of the new, democratic Poland.

Such "moral" subterfuge can well become a ready formula to justify every aggression of the Vatican and the hierarchy into the political and social life of the people.

Thus, the Red-baiting, disruptive clerical-labor outfit, the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists, is palmed off by its Chaplain, Father Clancy, as having solely "moral" objectives: "We are a religious organization devoted to advancing in organized labor the moral principles of the Catholic Church as expressed in the Pope's encyclicals."*

It is this sheerly moral driving force, no doubt, which in the automobile workers' union brings ACTU into close collaboration in with the Reutherite, Trotskyite and reactionary Social-Democratic elements on an anti-Soviet and Red-baiting platform. It is this moral imperative, we must assume, which summons the ACTU to the holy task of creating prejudice and division as a means of weakening and destroying the trade unions. It is this devotion to strictly moral principles—who can doubt it?—which brings the ACTU paper, the *Wage Earner*, to campaign for labor-management-government boards that will hog-tie the workers, to fight the National Negro Congress, to slander the people's republic of Yugoslavia, to support the pro-fascist camp in Poland, and to act as abettor of the bloody Franco regime.

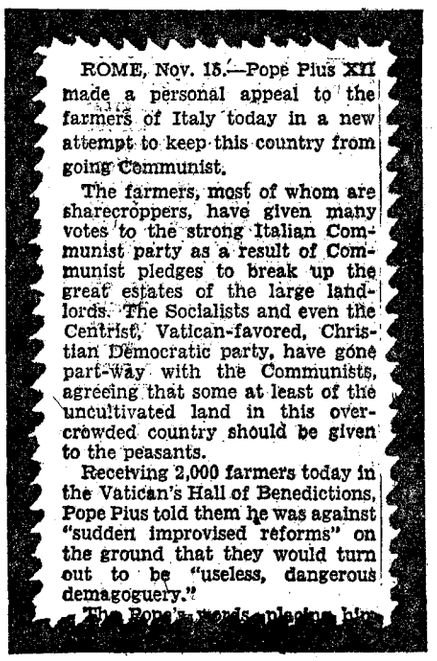
This "moral" demagogy can be met and its immoral *political* content exposed. It can be exposed to the Catholic as well as non-Catholic masses as being in form plain verbal trickery to disguise political meddling, and as being in essence pro-fascist and war-inciting. Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam, president of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, did it bluntly last summer when he spoke of the Vatican's support to reactionary political movements in Europe. "It is hard to understand the insistence," Bishop Oxnam said, "that Rome proceeds from moral principles in these matters. Its prestige, property and power appear to be the decisive considerations." He questioned the motives of religious leaders who "summon us to a 'holy war' on communism." (AP dispatch of July 8.)

* Quoted in the New York *Post*, July 10, 1946.

The high moral pretensions of the Vatican and the hierarchy have found and continue to find their fullest fruition in falangist Spain—the remaining Axis confederate in crime against humanity. The daily actions of the Vatican and its agencies here undermine the bridge of spurious morality upon which the Vatican hopes to cross in full force from religion to politics.

The issue is not one of the right of a Catholic to hold to his religious faith. One's very adherence to democracy means to fight for that right as a democratic principle. However, when the Vatican interferes in domestic or foreign politics, converting its authority in religious matters into a reactionary political weapon, then it is no longer a matter of freedom of conscience or belief. Reactionary politics must not find sanctuary at the altar. Within the American democratic tradition, it would seem that this issue was settled at the very birth of our nation, in the Constitutional provision for the separation of church and state.

It is the task of all progressives, of the labor movement, of all who strive to defeat the plotters of fascism and the conspirators of war, to bring the people fully to recognize the spiritual atom bomb now being tested in the Vatican Bikini. Effective struggle against this menace is vital to all Americans—Catholics, Protestants and Jews—for the fulfillment of their common aspirations for peace, democracy, security and human dignity.



ROME, Nov. 15.—Pope Pius XII made a personal appeal to the farmers of Italy today in a new attempt to keep this country from going Communist.

The farmers, most of whom are sharecroppers, have given many votes to the strong Italian Communist party as a result of Communist pledges to break up the great estates of the large landlords. The Socialists and even the Centrist, Vatican-favored, Christian Democratic party, have gone part-way with the Communists, agreeing that some at least of the uncultivated land in this overcrowded country should be given to the peasants.

Receiving 2,000 farmers today in the Vatican's Hall of Benedictions, Pope Pius told them he was against "sudden improvised reforms" on the ground that they would turn out to be "useless, dangerous demagoguery."

The Pope's words, placing his

From the New York "Herald Tribune," Nov. 16, 1946.

portside patter

By BILL RICHARDS

Admiral Byrd is going to lead a military expedition to the South Pole. Maybe the State Department heard the penguins were holding an election.

●

President Truman made no campaign speeches and now refuses to answer questions at press conferences. He evidently intends to solve our fiscal problems on the theory that silence is golden.

●

The Chinese hung numerous pictures of Chiang Kai-shek in the streets to celebrate his sixtieth birthday. Some say they hung almost as many pictures as they did effigies.

●

The Mergenthaler Company is trying to deduct its swindle losses from income taxes. All they stand to lose now is a bad Nickel.

●

The defendant is still in jail awaiting trial. He couldn't raise the $100,000 bail without going back to work for a few days.

●

Mrs. Nickel wondered where her husband got new automobiles, fur coats and yachts. She didn't recall his ever having been on a quiz program.

●

A combination automobile and airplane is now being manufactured. This comes as an answer to those who wondered whether cars could go any higher.

●

New York police are cracking down on illegal policy rackets. The gamblers are complaining that there isn't even safety in numbers anymore.

●

Franco says this is not "the most opportune time" to hold an election in Spain. He's afraid that the Spanish Republicans are not of the GOP brand.

●

In Atlantic City the voters elected a Republican candidate although he had been dead a full week. It was just that nobody noticed anything different about him.

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THE LAUGHTER OF SHOLEM ALEICHEM

He wrote in Yiddish, the language of the Jewish masses, helping to change their ghetto world.

By NATHAN AUSUBEL

His name was Sholem Rabinovitch, but he chose to call himself "Sholem Aleichem." It was certainly an appropriate name for a folk-writer who used the language of his people—the earthy Yiddish of the ghetto-folk of Eastern Europe.

"Sholem Aleichem" was not just a pseudonym; it symbolized the philosophy of life and art of a man who loved the common people. When a ghetto Jew meets another Jew he extends to him his hand in fraternal greeting and says heartily "Sholem Aleichem!" It means more than just a cheery "Hello." It is a benevolent "Peace be with you!" Behind its formal geniality lies a long history of the cosmic loneliness of the Jew in a world which has not wanted him. He finds the handclasp of his equally lonely brother reassuring in the stress of his insecurity. He therefore offers him the consolation of the "peace" he so longs for himself.

At the very outset let there be no mistake about it: Yiddish is not "a mongrel jargon," as its uninformed traducers claim, but a bona fide language some eight hundred years old. If it did not give rise until relatively modern times to a first-class literature it was because Jewish life had become a rank weed in the ghetto prisons of the world. After all, a language is only a tool, a means and not an end, and literature is merely a reflection of life itself. If Yiddish literature remained unproductive for so many centuries it was because in Eastern Europe Jewish life itself was so barren.

The history of Yiddish is fabulous but generally little known.* It was cradled in the Rhineland, a slowly evolving language, keeping pace with life and history itself. "It was compounded of Middle High German and Hebrew, with a sprinkling of French. After the Black Death ravaged Europe in 1348-51 and the Jews were accused of starting the epidemic by poisoning Christian wells, a universal "Jew-hunt" ensued. A wild hysteria swept the Rhineland, resulting in frightful massacres of Jews. A mass flight ensued eastward. This how it happened that the great Jewish communities of Russia and Poland were established. From that time on Yiddish took a new and interesting turn; it began to acquire Russian and Polish words and idioms.

Yiddish came into its own as a literary medium beginning only with the last quarter of the nineteenth century. It gave rise to a first class modern literature in which the leading figures were Mendele "Moicher Seforim" ("The Grandfather"), Judah L. Peretz and Sholem Aleichem. There were also the nationalist poet Simon Frug and the proletarian poets Morris Wintchewski and Morris Rosenfeld, and the fiction writers Mordecai Spektor, Jacob Dinesohn and S. An-Ski. These fathered in time a constellation of brilliant Yiddish novelists, playwrights and poets, among the best known being Sholem Asch, David Bergelson, Abraham Raisin, Moishe Nadir, Peretz Markish and Peretz Hirschbein.

Until the days of Mendele, "The Grandfather," Yiddish had served as the work-a-day language of the people. It was "good enough" for use in ordinary intercourse and in buying and selling, but it was regarded as too defiling for literary expression. For that exalted purpose only sacred Hebrew was appropriate. Jewish literature was a middle-class movement so far, and the Hebraists, regardless of their fine literary achievements, evidenced the same kind of intellectual snobbery which makes the upper caste Brahmins today write in Sanskrit and not in the vernacular Hindustani. Sure enough, there were books in Yiddish, but they were usually of a devotional character or they were just groschen chapbooks of Purimplays, folktales, Chassidic legends, "dream books" and jokes. They were intended for the halting use of unlettered women, ignorant tailors, butchers, cobblers, carpenters, tinsmiths and like "riff-raff," but never for the "respectable" (i.e., well-to-do.) The *Haskalah*, the Enlightenment Movement, saw the emergence of Zionism and the nationalistic revival of Hebrew. But since the bulk of the Jewish masses knew little or no Hebrew, an ideological war against Yiddish started. Yiddish was slandered and ridiculed by the Hebraists as an ugly-sounding jargon and as a disagreeable reminder of Jewish ghetto backwardness and degradation. Conversely, Hebrew was praised as the exalted and pure language of the Prophets, the only one fit for a great and proud people.

Fortunately, other and even more powerful historic forces were at work at the same time. The revolutionary struggle against absolutism (the rise of a large Jewish proletariat, the widespread poverty and rootlessness among the lower middle classes, the infiltration of the socialist movement into the ghetto, the bloody pogroms in 1881 and the legislative pogroms of the czarist Minister of the Interior, Ingnayev, in 1882—all these were provocative factors in favor of a Yiddish literary renaissance.

It is interesting to note that all three great Yiddish masters—Mendele, Peretz and Sholem Aleichem—had started out as Hebrew writers. But a social conscience, a deep sense of group loyalty, and a sensitivity to the moral and social climate of all that was pro-

*Few people realize that, despite the rigid ghetto restrictions and social and economic disabilities, Jews could not be kept out of the irresistible life-stream of European society. Yes, even Jews had to have their tales of chivalry, *and in Yiddish*, during the Middle Ages! They had their *Artur Buch* about King Arthur and Sir Lancelot. They also had their *Baba Buch* (Venice, 1540), the Yiddish version of the English epic poem which recounts the knightly exploits of Sir Bevis of Hampton.

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gressive in Poland and Russia made them change their language, so to speak, in midstream. After all, Hebrew was only a language and not a religion, as some made it out to be. Yiddish was the language of the masses. These great writers thought it all-important to communicate with the Jewish masses. They wished to show a way out of the stagnant ghetto life with its medievalism, superstition and warpings. They wished to lay open for them the sores of their disabilities and persecution under the czars and to show them that a better way of life was possible if only they willed it. In a way then, the fight for Yiddish and a Jewish literature in Yiddish took on a profoundly political and class character.

WHEN Sholem Aleichem's father discovered that his son was writing in Yiddish he was proud of his success but he chided him nevertheless: "It's only a pity that you are writing all these pieces in a 'week-day' language, the language of the cooks and the servant-girls."

Nonetheless, this "language of the cooks and the servant-girls" is a marvelous instrument, like a fine Stradivarius; the richest, the most varied, the most subtle word-play can be evoked with it. Sholem Aleichem was unquestionably the foremost virtuoso in its expressive use.

But virtuosity was never the end of his extraordinary talent. He was a great artist who employed the most artless means. For him Yiddish was not just a language but a palpitating, living organism, a sensitive medium for urgent communication with the suffering Jewish masses whose self-elected champion he was. Even more than Tolstoy and Chekhov, Sholem Aleichem wrote for the people and about the people, not from the mountain-summit down but simply, directly, face to face—like one friend talking amiably to another. That is why all of his characters are so astonishingly alive and real. "To be a folk-writer," he said, "one must love people!"

It was this love which made him strive to become the articulator of the Jewish spirit, to present in bold relief its frustrations, its dreams, its inchoate longings. He gloried in the courage of the Jewish masses, their ability to face disaster and humiliation with laughter: ironic, scornful, bitter laughter; gentle, tired laughter. Humor has ever been one of the few defensive weapons of the defenseless Jew.

With tongue-in-cheek Sholem Aleichem expounds his doctrine of laughter: "There are some individuals who like to look at people in misfortune, like to peer into their faces while they weep, follow them with their eyes as they leave the cemetery, watch them closely as they wring their hands and beat their heads against the wall. I, for one, don't like such scenes. Say what you will, I have a distaste for sad scenes. My Muse doesn't wear black crepe. She may be poor, but believe me—she is jolly!"

And jolly his Muse certainly was. But it would be a gross oversimplification to leave it at that. Although one's first impulse is to laugh heartily at Sholem Aleichem's witticisms and at the foibles of his characters, later one begins to find the situation disturbing, even tragic. The taste of gall and wormwood is always present in his writings. By making tragedy uproariously funny he only underscores its poignancy. In his youth he had nourished himself on the works of the great satirists: Cervantes, Swift, Gogol, Heine, Dickens, Mark Twain and Chekhov. "Satire," he wrote later, "is a precious instrument in the trained hands of an artist. It makes the most difficult task easy. It always hits the nail on the head. The readers split their sides laughing, but are not aware in the slightest that it is at themselves they are laughing. It is indeed a bitter kind of laughter."

Sholem Aleichem was a specialist in every variety of laughter, sweet, sour, bitter and vitriolic, but it was the bitter-sweet that he excelled in particularly. Just examine the characters in his Jewish *Comedie Humaine*. Their number is legion; Sholem Aleichem was one of the supreme characterologists of our time. He created literally hundreds upon hundreds of characters, and each is stamped with its unique but universal individuality. They were the little nondescript Jews who, like his own father, "a poor Jew with a worried look," lived in the Dead-End Street and in the Hunger Street of all the ghettos of the world. They were the tatterdemallion tailors and *shammosim* (sextons) and drovers and small tradespeople, the impecunious *melamedim* (teachers of Scripture), the absurd *shadchonim* (marriage-brokers), the jolly *klezmorim* (the folk-musicians), who were as devoted to their fiddles and cellos as their more eminent descendants—Heifetz, Kreisler, Elman and Feuermann—were to theirs.

But above all he wrote of the lowly and the pure in heart, those who kept their dream of goodness alive and green in the sunless ghetto-prisons in which their "Christian" persecutors had confined them. They were the superfluous people, men without a trade, without a means of livelihood. All the doors of opportunity had been slammed in their faces. *Luftmenschen*, they were called; they seemed miraculously to draw their sustenance from the atmosphere, like aerial plants. They were helpless but never hopeless, endowed with a robust will to survive that chagrined all the anti-Semites. They were creatures of the earth, and when they suffered pain or faced the abyss they did not resign themselves to mere lamentation. At first they wept, for they were only flesh and blood; but when they had dried their tears they burst into laughter. And what laughter that was! A mountain-stream of their will-to-joy, a full-throated gurgle of scorn and defiance, a belly-laugh affirmation of the final triumph of the tortured weed. As Sholem Aleichem's best-beloved character, Tevia the Dairyman, remarks with delicate irony: "And what if we do suffer? That's way we are Jews—as you say: 'God's Chosen People'."

IN LIFE as in death the bonds of love that drew Sholem Aleichem to the Jewish workers, to the great masses of the plain folk, proved strong and indestructible. Several months before his death he drew up a will in which he directed: "Wherever I die, let me not be buried among 'aristocrats,' leading citizens, or the rich. Let me be buried among plain Jews, workers—the real people! If this be done, the tombstone that eventually will be placed over my grave will decorate the plain graves around me, and the plain graves will be as ornaments to mine, just as the plain, honest folk had adorned their own writer."

Sholem Aleichem was painfully conscious of the class struggle. A gentle, mellow person otherwise, he bristled with anger at the exploitation, cruelty and arrogance of the Jewish noveau riche. "I hate a *nogid* (a rich man)!" cries the poor woman who sells fatted geese to the rich. "A *nogid* is a spider!"

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What a stinging tongue-lashing Sholem Aleichem gives to Yehupetz society, to the vulgar money-grubbers, bankers, middlemen and *schachermachers* (finaglers)! He shows up their "aristocratic" pretensions, their gossipy, evil ways. Their principal cultural delight is card-playing and speaking a murderous Russian with an elegant Yehupetz accent. They are heartless cynics whose most pleasant diversion is ridiculing one another. They adopt preposterous Russian names, feeling ashamed of their Jewish ones. Platon Panteleonovitch Lokshentoppov (noodle-pot) is one of the slapstick names the author gives them. Their preoccupation with money brings from him the bitter complaint in "The Lottery": "Who was it who thought up money? People are tortured on account of it, knock their heads against the wall. Everybody wants to eat up everybody else alive. There are no brothers, no sisters, no fathers, no children, no neighbors, no good friends, nothing precious in the world except money and money and money! . . ."

It wasn't only the rich that he satirized but the "free" society of capitalism. In "The Revolution on the Other Side of the Sambation" (the mythical river across which are supposed to live the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel) he lists all the freedoms available to its lucky citizens:

"If one has no means of livelihood he is free to die of hunger.

"If one is unemployed he is free to knock his head against the wall.

"If one breaks a leg he is free to walk on crutches.

"If one gets married and hasn't enough to support his wife he is free to go begging alms with her from house to house.

"If one dies he is free to get buried."

THE revolutionary struggle against czarist autocracy found in Sholem Aleichem a fervent champion. He was swept away by the spirit of the times, which was ardent, purposeful, socially imbued and heroic. Unfortunately for him, he was constantly being torn between his loyalties to the religious-Zionist bourgeoisie who formed his lifelong milieu and his love and pity for the Jewish workers and the rootless elements of the Jewish masses. A complicated character, he was perpetually wrestling with the confusion and unconscious contradictions within him. His social and economic views, although very partial to socialism, never quite reached a resolution. At least he never took an unequivocal militant stand towards the revolutionary movement, unlike his friend and idol, Maxim Gorky. This was but the inevitable consequence of a romantic idealism which sentimentally longs for a better world but which lacks the stamina for implementing it.

Nonetheless Sholem Aleichem's heart, if not his deeds, were with the revolutionary movement. The revolutionaries represented to him a superior, exalted type of mankind. He wrote of them with awe and admiration. For

"Liberated Village," a lithograph by William Gropper.

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instance, in his story "Joseph" he describes an illegal meeting that takes place in the woods. Joseph, the revolutionist, speaks. His words are flame: they burn into the hearts of all who hear him. As they listen they have a feeling that soon "he will fly away together with his winging words." Most moved is the widow's daughter. She squats on the ground, "her feet under her, her hands folded on her breast. Her face is radiant, her cheeks are flushed, her lovely cherry-eyes smile—and straight up at him—at him!"

And finally, when Joseph is arrested, her admiration blossoms into a deep, abiding love. She is ecstatic about his deeds; he is a hero to her, a knight-errant.

Perhaps in none of his works as much as in "Tevia the Dairyman" does Sholem Aleichem apostrophize the Jewish revolutionary youth. Their purity of heart, their ardor and selflessness moved him deeply. For instance, as Hudel, Tevia's idealistic daughter, listens to the revolutionary Feferel explain the meaning of socialism, she is overwhelmed. "It is not possible to grasp this with one's intelligence alone," she cries. "One has got to feel, feel with one's heart." And there is even an overtone of the love Nicolette had for Aucassin in Hudel's words when Feferel is exiled to Siberia. She has decided to follow him there, and so she says simply:

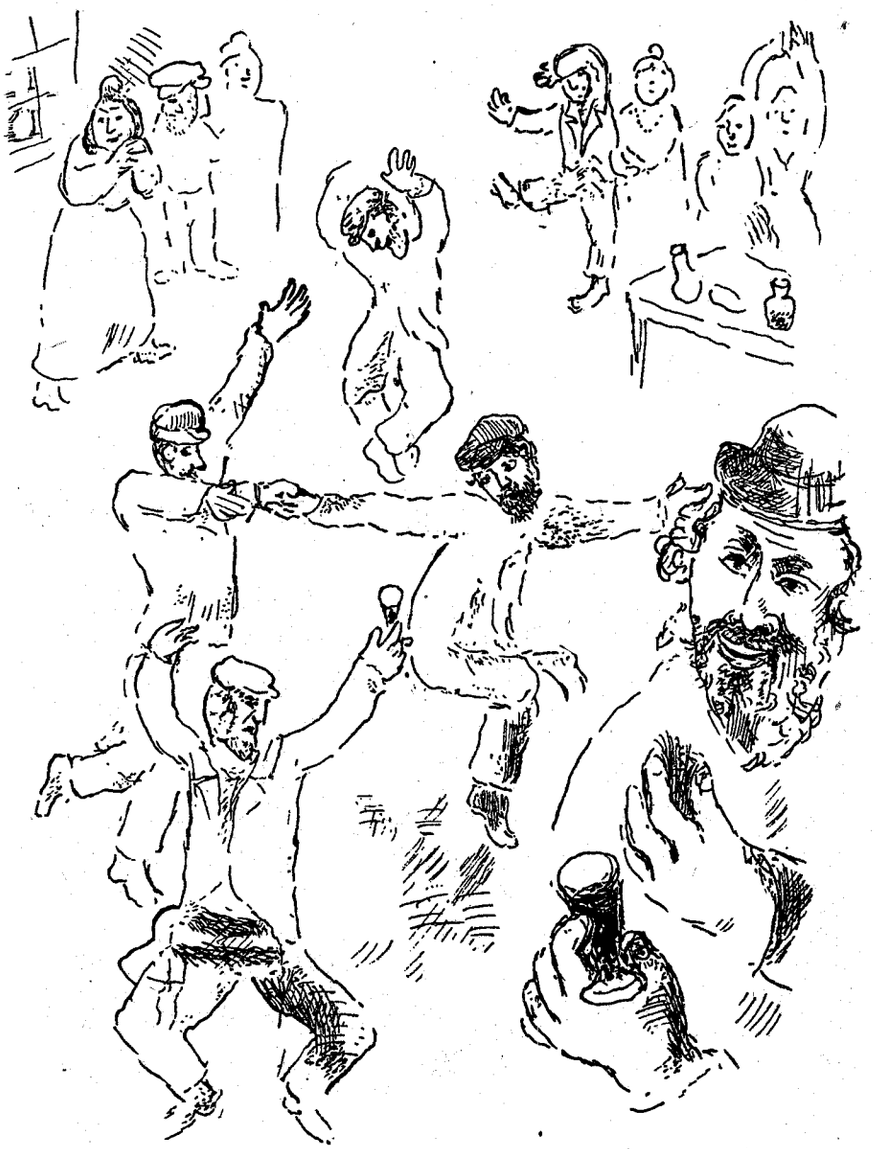
"As long as I am with him nothing matters, even if we go to the devil!"

When Feferel is finally led away in chains on his long trek Hudel doesn't betray any sign of grief. Why should she grieve? To her he is a paladin fighting for a socialist world. When the simple-hearted Tevia sees this he is filled with wonder. Later he tells about it: "So he went off, the devil knows where, and she remained here. She didn't even shed one tear—not even for form's sake." In his confused groping way he finally figures it all out after she has gone to join Feferel in Siberia. "Take your sister Hudel," he says to Beilka, "she is a first-rate pauper. Just the same—look what she writes from the devil alone knows where, from the other end of the world. She writes she is happy and with that *schlimazl* of hers, Feferel, too!"

As a matter of fact, Tevia develops an enormous admiration for Feferel, who is the cause of so much unhappiness for his daughter. In his own confused way Tevia experiences a flash of insight. He sounds almost as if he were bragging when he says: "He is a fellow who is unconcerned with what happens to him. All that matters is the world. Furthermore, he has a head on his shoulders, no mere noodle-pot with a shiny glaze either! And what a tongue! Pure gold with gilt on it!"

Sholem Aleichem died in the Bronx thirty years ago, certain that a happier life would come soon to the Jews of Russia. Only one year later, the Czarist tyranny which he hated so was overthrown.

We need not be nostalgic about the world of Sholem Aleichem that has vanished with the old Russia. The gentle Tevias no longer have to dodge a cruel fate and an even crueller need for resignation to it. The ingenious Menachim Mendels no longer have to waste their creative talents in pipe dreams and in finagling with slippery luck. They have become collective farmers and skilled workers, or engineers, doctors and teachers. The ghettos are gone for good and in their place are farming and industrial communities boasting a rich Jewish culture with a socialist content. Yiddish is the official language there, as it is in the Jewish autonomous region of Birobidjan. It is the language of instruction in Jewish schools; it is used by the judges in courtrooms, by the professors in lecture halls, and by scientists in their laboratories. The colorful and quaint have gone out of the world of Sholem Aleichem, but with them have also departed the poverty, the stagnation, the hopelessness, the fear and the anguish that once ruled the ghetto.



Pen sketch by Marc Chagall. From "Burning Lights," by Bella Chagall. Schocken Books.

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WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

"There is something qualitatively new in US politics." The first of two articles.

By A. B. MAGIL

AFTER a five weeks' speaking and writing trip that took me to the West Coast I returned to New York in time to get caught in the storm of November 5. Especially poignant for me was the defeat of three out of the four progressive Democratic Congressmen from the state of Washington—among them such stalwarts as Hugh DeLacy and John Coffee. But let us not sit in our wet clothes, shivering and wringing our hands. For there's work to do, a fight to be waged, a war to be won.

Let's first be certain we know what hit us. It was no hurricane, nor, despite the geological labors of the big business press, did the land slide. In the first election after World War I, in 1920, the Republicans polled 61 percent of the total vote, the Democrats 34 percent. In the 1936 election in which President Roosevelt carried all but two states the Democrats polled about 59 percent of the vote, the GOP 37 percent. Those were landslides—and the lineup in Congress on both occasions showed it. But this year preliminary figures indicate that when the total vote is tabulated, it will divide approximately 55 percent for the Republicans and 45 percent for the Democrats. This too is reflected in the lineup in Congress: in the House the GOP has almost exactly reversed the results of 1944—and nobody claimed a Democratic landslide then.

More pertinent for purposes of comparison is the last off-year election in 1942. In that year the Republicans actually received a majority of the votes, 50.6 percent, as against 47.4 percent for the Democrats, though the latter managed to retain control of Congress by a narrow margin. It is clear therefore that this year's GOP gain and Democratic loss represent no sharp swing, but a shift of only a small percentage of the voters.

All this is said not in order to minimize the seriousness of the Republican victory—the first in sixteen years—but to help define its contours and meaning. Why did the GOP fail to repeat the pattern of 1920 or even that of 1928, when Hoover defeated Al Smith so decisively? The answer to this question is vitally important. For the fact is that the Democratic Party today is far more disorganized and demoralized than it was in 1920. And this year it campaigned with the albatross of the Truman record around its neck, a record that not even the ghost of Roosevelt, which the Democratic chieftains invoked so urgently, could exorcise out of the lives and thoughts of the voters. Part of the answer is that the American people have learned a lot in the sixteen years of the Hoover depression, the New Deal struggles and the war against fascism. These days they are more inclined to look gift elephants in the mouth and to be at the very least skeptical. But in view of the desolate record of the Truman administration a more active cohesive factor was required to prevent a major swing to the Republicans. I think that Samuel Grafton, in his syndicated column two days after the election, put his finger on it when he wrote: ". . . can anyone doubt that if northern and western liberalism had not continued, somehow, at work, under appalling political conditions, the election would have been an absolute rout?" Defining "northern and western liberalism" more precisely, can anyone doubt that it was the work of the *independent* political forces—the CIO Political Action Committee, progressive AFL and railroad brotherhood groups, the independent Citizens Committee of the Arts, Sciences and Professions, National Citizens PAC, the National Farmers Union, the Conference of Progressives, the American Labor Party, the Communist Party, various local and state liberal organizations—that it was this movement, whatever its weaknesses, which prevented additional millions from turning to Republican reaction?

This is something qualitatively new in American political life. No one who ignores it, no one who thinks in terms of perpetual Republican-Democratic cycles moving in the same orbit, or who fatuously chortles that "PAC got licked" can understand the meaning of November 5 and the perspectives for the future.

IT IS true, nevertheless, that the activity of the independent forces, directed toward the support of progressive candidates irrespective of party, could not prevent a majority of the independent voters from expressing their disgust with the Truman administration by backing Republicans. These independent voters, who are not finally committed to either major party, are estimated at 9,000,000. It has long been a truism that the Democratic Party cannot win a national election unless, in addition to the Solid South and the regular vote produced by the city machines, it can rally a majority of the independent voters. In 1944, with Roosevelt heading the ticket, 62 percent of the independent voters, according to the Gallup poll, favored the Democrats. Even as late as July of this year the Democrats still held the edge. But a poll shortly before the election gave the GOP a 59 percent margin among the independents. No doubt this situation would have been even worse had it not been for the work of the labor and progressive movement.

Why did the shift occur? Was it the popular mandate that changed in the two years since 1944, or was it the character of the government? Did a majority of the electorate on November 5 embrace the Republican program, or did they vote (a good many by staying at home) against the failure of the Truman administration and the Democratic-controlled Congress to carry out the Roosevelt program? A significant answer was given in advance of the election in a dispatch in the New York *Times* of October 22 by James Reston in which he reported a trend toward the Republicans in the Midwest. "One finds little conviction," he wrote, "that the Republicans have the answer to any of the great questions that beset the nation, or even any of the other problems that annoy the electorate. There is, in fact, a protest against politicians in general, as if

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these politicians were persons remote and unconnected with the people. One feels, frankly, that if the people voted their true feelings and had two votes, they would cast one against the Democrats and one against the Republicans."

The Gallup poll also sheds some light on this question. The Gallup organization took a pre-election poll among people who voted Democratic in 1944, but switched this year. The main reasons they gave were:

"Disorganization of the Democratic Party; lack of unity within the party; no program; they don't get things done; they've landed the country in a mess.

"Bungling of OPA.

"Shortage of food and other products.

"It's time for a change."

None of these reasons represents affirmative support of the GOP program; and none represents rejection of what these people voted for in 1944.

A number of omissions from the list are also significant. Despite the anti-labor and Red-baiting propaganda of the Republicans, the National Association of Manufacturers and other reactionary agencies, the principal reasons for shifting from the Democrats to the Republicans do not include "coddling of labor unions," "CIO dictatorship," "Communists in government" and other such tripe. This doesn't mean that such propaganda had no affect on this body of voters and on the electorate as a whole. It had an effect in 1944 when it undoubtedly cut into the Roosevelt strength, and it probably influenced an even larger proportion of voters this year, particularly in view of the fact that so many Democratic candidates countered Republican Red-baiting with their own slightly suaver brand. Yet while the balance in a few individual contests may have been tipped by this type of fraudulent appeal, I don't think it can be said that nationally the Goebbels line proved decisive in swinging the election.

An omission from this list of a different kind is the failure to mention foreign policy as a main reason for turning to the Republicans. This is not surprising. Apart from the historic tendency of the American people, including the labor movement, to view foreign affairs as something remote from their lives, the goldbrick of bipartisanship in foreign policy, which had been sold to the public, prevented this group of voters—and so many others—from sensing the major impact of this issue on their own welfare.

AMONG what classes did the GOP make its gains? This question cannot be answered statistically, but I believe the class trend can be charted with approximate accuracy. The farmers are traditionally Republican, but from 1932 to 1936 inclusive Roosevelt and the Democratic Party won a majority among them. Beginning with 1938, however, the GOP recaptured the farm vote. This year the trend toward the Republicans continued, but on the whole there was no spectacular rise in the GOP vote in the rural areas. It was in the large metropolitan centers that the Republican Party appears to have made its heaviest gains. Undoubtedly the GOP made some headway among the organized workers in these cities, including CIO members. One indication of this is that for the first time in years the Republicans carried Wayne County (Detroit), stronghold of the United Automobile Workers-CIO. The fact that many AFL leaders openly or obliquely supported Republican candidates also influenced a section of AFL members, as did the action of the AFL hierarchy in effusively embracing the NAM "free enterprise" and "higher productivity" (speedup) ideology and the get-tough-with-Russia policy. In the defeat of Congressman DeLacy, for example, the refusal of the State Federation of Labor and of the AFL unions in Seattle to support him may well have proved decisive in a state in which the preponderant labor strength is in the AFL.

It doesn't seem likely, however, that the gains made among the workers would in most cases have been sufficient to turn the tide for the Republicans. It is probable that a major shift occurred among the middle-class voters in the cities. Demoralized by the Truman policies, isolated from the labor movement (for which labor itself is partly responsible), that sector of the population whose class position condemns it to instability fell prey to the raucous "free enterprise" ballyhoo. This is borne out by an analysis of the vote in New York City, which shows that the Democratic Party suffered its heaviest losses in the middle-class and white collar districts.

Among the Negro people, too, who had been won from their traditional adherence to the Republican Party by the progressive policies of President Roosevelt, a trend back to the Republicans developed, though its extent is not yet clear. What happened in Harlem shows that where a real fight on issues was waged it was possible to limit or prevent this drift to the Republicans. Senator Mead could not have carried Harlem, as he could not have carried New York City as a whole, without the votes of the American Labor Party. For the Democratic vote in Harlem declined more than 50 percent from 1944, while Dewey's vote increased by one-third. Yet the essentially independent and progressive character of the Negro vote in Harlem —and probably elsewhere—is evidenced in the fact that the voters reelected Rep. Adam Clayton Powell in the Twenty-Second Congressional District and the outstanding Negro progressive in the state legislature, Assemblyman Hulan Jack, in both cases by a more than two to one margin. The Harlem voters also chose Democrats in three other Harlem assembly districts, though by much smaller pluralities.

THE vote in New York State is significant nationally from a number of standpoints. For one thing, Governor Dewey's large plurality once more puts him up front among those yearning to be struck by the lightning of the GOP presidential nomination. For another, the existence of the American Labor Party in this state made it possible to achieve the seeming paradox of a strengthening of the forces of independent political action in the midst of an overwhelming Republican victory. It was the sharp decline in Democratic strength, thanks not only to the Truman policies, but to the Farley-Flynn influence in the state organization, that inflicted so savage a defeat on Senator Mead. Whereas Dewey polled 94 percent of the New York vote he received in 1944 against Roosevelt, Mead polled only 62 percent of the FDR vote on the Democratic line. In contrast, the vote of the ALP, which also nominated Mead, while somewhat less than in 1944, was proportionately greater. On the other hand, the Social-Democratic hate group, the Liberal Party, which, while

(*Continued on page* 31)

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REPUBLICAN PANDORAS

Congressmen Knutson and Arends are eager to lift the lid for a "free flow of incentive capital."

By VIRGINIA GARDNER

Washington

"I'M JUST a little country banker and farmer. My town is Melvin —just a little town of 500."

Rep. Leslie C. Arends of Illinois, who will be majority whip of the House, smiled. Rep. Arends is much suaver than the man who will head the important Ways and Means Committee, Rep. Harold Knutson of Minnesota, a rugged type. Rep. Knutson was particularly rugged in his partiality for the Nazis prior to our entrance to the war. Now that the Republicans are in the saddle he is mincing no words in his zeal to reintroduce the Harding-Coolidge economy. Rep. Arends, on the other hand, while he agrees with Knutson on all important points, is like Rep. Everett Dirksen, another Illinois Republican, who once described to me how he used to carry a dinner pail and had callouses on his hands, and how he had not forgotten the little man.

When at a press conference (a cozy one attended by the *Wall Street Journal*, the Chicago *Journal of Commerce* and me) Rep. Knutson was asked if his proposed twenty percent tax reduction would be across the board, he said yes. "We would change the withholding rates the first of April," he said. "It shouldn't take long to get a quickie through both houses." But one of the financial writers, apparently unwilling to believe this of Rep. Knutson, asked if he really meant it would be the same reduction for the "little fellow" as the very rich man. At this Rep. Knutson, a round, bouncy little man in bright orange-brown tweeds, the same imported tweeds he acquired last winter and wears with such an air of incongruity, turned to the financial writer indignantly. "Let me ask you this," he said. "Where do we look for venture capital?"

"What kind of capital?" I asked.

"Venture capital, V-E-N-T-U-R-E," spelled out Rep. Knutson, giving me a contemptuous glance. It is not that he is contemptuous of the ladies. Hadn't his secretary told me he was having this press conference because so many reporters kept calling, "particularly the women reporters?" Maybe he was disappointed that I was the only one who had shown up. It is known how much he admires certain women of the Congress, too, and even at this moment the picture of Clare Luce looked down at him wistfully from one wall, while from another the Republicans' forgotten man, Alf Landon, beamed.

"Why, in the higher brackets," answered one of the financial reporters.

"Well," replied Rep. Knutson without the flicker of an eyelash, "that's what we're interested in."

And he did something Rep. Arends never would have done. He put us right back into the Twenties. "Our experience is that tax reductions are followed by increased revenues," said Rep. Knutson when I asked him if he wouldn't try to balance the budget first. "Under Harding and Coolidge," he said, just like that, staring at us with his bright round brown eyes without a trace of embarrassment, "we paid off ten billion dollars—by making for a freer flow of incentive capital."

"Then that is the important thing?" said the pale young man from the Chicago *Journal of Commerce*, and Rep. Knutson said, "Yes." I hope the other reporter never again has the bad taste to ask Rep. Knutson about the "little fellow."

REP. LESLIE ARENDS wore his tweeds with ease, and the bright November sunlight falling through the window of his office picked out the quiet but handsome cufflinks, and set off his thick thatch of platinum blond hair.

The strong sunlight, however, did something to Rep. Arends' smile, and his pale blue eyes took on an exceedingly cold and almost opaque look. Rep. Arends' black shoes were shined to perfection, and he wore a bow tie. At least here was one item in which the Republicans were following Mr. Truman and not vice versa.

"Now that the President has decontrolled about everything, what's left for you all to do?" I had asked Rep. Arends. This was the day before the Washington *Post* said that it had learned that the President would approve amending the Wagner Act.

"Not much from that angle," he said, "and of course we go along on foreign policy."

"Which is a Republican foreign policy anyway, isn't it, according to

Harari

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"... And they say even the bunny hug will come back too!"

Senator Vandenberg?" I remarked.

"That's right," he said, sober now, "that's right. I do feel, though," he went on in a confidential way which made me feel that Rep. Arends and I were growing closer, "I do feel that the Wagner Act needs—well, of course I think it needs amending, but I don't want to say just how or where, at this time. Just say I think the Wagner Labor Relations Act needs to be brought to the attention of Congress. I think the vote of plenty of honest patriotic labor men shows they want it brought to Congress' attention."

I asked how he knew that. "I have talked to them. Of course, there isn't much labor in my district," he said comfortably. "But I know."

"Let's see, didn't you author a labor bill yourself?" I asked.

"Yes," he said modestly, "the Case bill was my bill originally." He held up a self-deprecatory hand. "Let's don't say I am planning to sponsor anything as yet in this Congress—though I still think the Case bill was a constructive piece of legislation and Case says he will introduce it again.

"We've got to get this across." He wagged a finger at me and, absorbed in his subject, spoke sternly. "Whatever legislation we pass, we've got to get it across that it's not to punish labor, but—" Suddenly he looked away. Apparently recalling that I was from NEW MASSES, he finished rather lamely:

"That is, and I speak only for myself, my idea is that any legislation should be rather to facilitate labor-management relations."

Every few minutes the telephone rang and he told another newsman that he didn't expect any real "fight" on who would be floor leader—and, off the record, he told who he thought had the inside track.

"Would you say just a word about your philosophy, Mr. Arends?" I asked. "Would you classify yourself as in the Chicago *Tribune* category of Republicans, say?"

"No-o," he said evenly, "I'm independent. I hew to the line, that is, but in fundamental things affecting my nation, my country comes first."

"Could you say just a little more specifically—"

"I mean," he obliged, "that I am not for government by theory—." His voice was heavy with meaning.

"You mean," I breathed, "that you like things—practical?"

"Exactly," and he rewarded me with a smile. "A government should be run in a practical way. Like I'm in a business—"

"You mean that there's no difference in running a country and running a bank?"

"Let's say 'business' instead of 'bank,'" he said thoughtfully, then added: "Let's make it 'small business.' Of course," he said quickly, "I think we should be progressive."

"Would you say you are progressive like Eric Johnston is progressive? Or do you think he's a little too radical?"

"Johnston," said Rep. Arends, who was less dazzling but not unlike the personality boy of the US Chamber of Commerce who stepped out of its presidency to become czar of Hollywood morals and mores, "is sound in some things. But in others he goes too far."

"Would you go as far as Representative Reece (Brazilla Carroll Reece, chairman of the Republican National Committee) in your desire to balance the budget and cut off—was it one million or two million federal workers he wanted to cut off?" I asked.

But Rep. Arends appeared impatient—a little cross, in fact—whenever I tried to find out specifics of how his little country banking operation was going to work. "One million, I believe," he answered, "but you

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know, the people must give us time. Rome wasn't built in a day. We can't correct all these things in a day, like balancing the budget. I think there should be some tax reduction, though I won't agree to twenty percent, and I think it has to come *after* we balance the budget. We end up the fiscal year with a $1,900,000,000 deficit, right? Then in July, 1947, we begin cutting. We don't have to do it now."

"But would you fire one million workers?" I persisted.

"Not that. Let's say, a sustaining amount. Within a quarter of a million either way. Half a million. Though I'd rather not use any one figure. Gee whiz, personally I feel we can't do it all now." A sales tax? "I'm not in favor of a federal sales tax, at this time. The only way I'd favor it would be for a reduction of the national debt."

Before I left I could not resist remarking—aware as I was of Arends' pleasure at the defeat of Reps. Alexander J. Resa and Edward A. Kelly of Chicago and William A. Rowan of South Chicago—"Well, Rep. Sabath (Adolph J.) got back, despite all the efforts to get him by American Action and the Republicans.".

"I would expect Sabath to get back," he snapped. "After all, his district is practically totally foreign-born."

I tried one other subject as I neared the door. "Of course, it would be much easier to balance the budget if and when the atom bomb is outlawed, wouldn't it?"

"Well, yes," he said.

"I notice a smile on your face. Could it be you seem to think that's sort of a fairy tale?" Yes, he added—at this time.

UN BUEN OBRERO

"I had seen a glamorous movie about a noble Russian family, and I was lost in wonder that in Ybor City one could find diseases of the great."

A Short Story by JOSE YGLESIAS

EL ISLENO drove the truck for *El Bien Publico* when I first started to work there. It was my first job. I was to help him deliver groceries, and for working every afternoon and all day Saturday I was to get two and a half dollars a week. *El Bien Publico* was a cooperative grocery store and meat market. About thirty cigarmakers owned it collectively and took turns working as salesmen and at the cash register. Since it did not open until the afternoon on week days the system worked well. However, there was nothing impersonal about it. It was not a business concern. Everyone seemed to have a hand in everything; when the wives of members came to shop they moved about as if they were in a well-stocked kitchen of their own. That last bothered me. I was in high school and had absorbed some of the American mores. Ybor City, that section of Tampa where the Spaniards and Italians who worked in the cigar factories lived, made me impatient when it did not make me feel ashamed. It was an anomaly, an island of Latins in the South.

El Isleno was a member of the store but he got paid for his work as driver because he did it regularly. He was a large dark man and he moved slowly. I liked him a lot but I was also a little contemptuous of his ways. I certainly would not have wanted to meet any of my high school friends when I was with him. He could not speak English, and he seemed a little dirty to me. My high school friends, all of whom belonged to the part of Tampa that was not Ybor City, would not have said it but they would have thought him greasy. Perhaps they would have thought him peculiar. Since I was Spanish I always suspected that their lighthearted talk about Latins hid a contempt from which I just barely escaped. But then no one, I think, liked El Isleno very much.

He was called El Isleno because he came from the Canary Isles, and his temperament was not like that of other Spaniards. He seemed a sullen man. He, too, seemed ashamed of something. With me he was frank and even talkative, and I sometimes felt that I was his confidant. He never talked about his family in the store, and he never went by his home when I was with him. Yet once he volunteered, "My boy is sick."

"What's wrong with him?" I asked, remembering the five-year-old boy who came with him once to the store.

"Hemophilia."

I had seen a glamorous movie about a noble Russian family, and I was lost in wonder that in Ybor City one could find the diseases of the great.

"The kings left us ignorance and poverty and disease," he said. "It keeps us weak."

He was always kind. He never was one who would ask me to do little errands that kept me on the run. Though the other members liked my industriousness they put my good intentions to a great test: perhaps it was thoughtlessness but there were a thousand little things that they did not hesitate to ask me to do because I always seemed so willing.

El Isleno would stop them. "He is my assistant and he isn't going to run around doing what you fat asses can easily do." Then when we were out in the truck he would say, "Don't let them order you around. They don't pay you enough. All day long they kowtow to the foremen and then they come here and want to play boss." El Isleno did not like them much either.

I LIKED him, you see, because he said the things that I felt but could not say if I were to be polite as my mother had taught me, or successful in the manner that school, with the essays of Elbert Hubbard, had also instructed me. With El Isleno I felt a freedom that I had never felt with anyone. At home, how could I be free? I was too close to it to see anything but the contrast to the American life that my friends in school lived naturally. At school I always felt that I was differ-

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ent in a shameful way. It was true, I reflected, though I never said it, that I was beginning to think in English. But my name was always going to be undeniably Spanish. I wanted to be Spanish, but I didn't want to be Ybor-Cityish. And so I seemed always held in. But El Isleno was critical of both and so relieved me of my guilt concerning these ways of life that pulled me in what I thought were opposite directions. There was always home to go to after work and school the next day, but while we were in the delivery truck we were on free ground.

El Isleno treated me as an equal because he let me argue with him. It was not the equality of the simple-minded who is older only in body, nor yet the conscious levelling of natural differences that the well-meaning educated attempt with the young. He taunted me and ridiculed my opinions, but he took me seriously, for he wanted to teach me things. And he respected my intelligence: he knew I was a bright student in school and all Spaniards in Ybor City respect that.

He taught me how to drive the truck, and he walked me home the first time I got drunk. It was with him that I first began to feel like a man. To be a man in Ybor City meant for most that one had finally visited a whorehouse and could then join in the conversations of the men at the cafes and the street corners.

One Saturday noon we were so busy that we were still out with the truck long past the time that we should have gone home for lunch. We passed a brewery and El Isleno asked me if I wanted some beer. We were both thirsty, and since the store bought beer from that particular brewery, we could go in any time and drink beer from the big, cooled barrels they kept for thirsty wholesale customers. We drank two large glasses and went back to the truck.

Antonio Frasconi.

The bright hot sun seemed to dim and light up as we drove back. I looked at the people and the narrow, short streets of Ybor City, and I seemed not to recognize either. The streets seemed very long, the afternoon strange, and I could not remember what I was doing in the truck. I looked at El Isleno, and I felt very giddy, seeing him stolid and heavy at the wheel. I was glad I was not driving, and I kept quiet so that he would not know that two glasses of beer had so unsteadied me. The long journey ended abruptly. He let me off home instead of taking me to the store.

"I'll come by," he said, "to pick you up after I have lunch." I stood grinning at him until he drove away. Inside there were sandwiches my mother left for me. I ran to the bedroom to see how I looked in the mirror when I was drunk. My face was a little flushed and I laughed at the sight. Then I walked back to the kitchen very soberly, the thought that El Isleno might have noticed my face bracing me up a bit.

"WHAT happened?" I asked, a little startled when he shook me as I lay on the porch swing. "What is it?" I looked at the clock on the factory tower two blocks away. I had slept three hours.

"You were asleep," he said, "I guess that the work and the beer helped." He had come to get me, but seeing me asleep he had worked all afternoon by himself.

"You should have awakened me!"

"That's all right. You had worked enough. I felt better after I had lunch myself. I didn't want to tell you, but the beer made me feel very strange. It gave me a kind of fatigue. That's why I drove so slowly."

That day we worked very well together. On Saturdays the store was open until midnight, and every time we were out with the truck El Isleno talked and argued with me. That evening he told me that he had known my father. There were very few people in Tampa who remembered him. Once in a while a visitor who had known my family for a long time mentioned him. That would happen when I was called in to be exhibited to them. I was very tall for my age and I would stand awkwardly and listen to their comments about me.

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"He doesn't look like Julian," they would say, then add as if to remind me of someone I must not forget, "He was a good young man." El Isleno said something else, "*El era un buen obrero.*" That meant not just that he was a good worker but that he was a union man. The "good" referred to his relationship with workers as a group.

Always before when I had been reminded of my father by other people it had been a sad thing, and although he said it with solemnity, there was something of grandeur in El Isleno's tone.

The others reminded me that I had been left fatherless when I was three, that I had a great debt to pay my mother, and that when my father had left Ybor City to go to hospitals in Cuba there had been collections in the factories to pay his passage and expenses. That we had had to accept charity was what their remembrance of my father meant to me. El Isleno made me feel proud of my father, and for the first time I was able to see him as a man, not as a wound or pitiful thing I carried in me.

"In those days," El Isleno told me, "the cigarmakers were not so Americanized. In those days the manufacturers had respect for us. Now look at them. Look how glad they are to have San Martin, who is a foreman, in the cooperative."

"But my uncle is a foreman, and he's a good man. He's very friendly and he doesn't act like San Martin."

"Ha!" he exhaled ironically, "that is what you think because he is your uncle. He's just as arrogant as the others. Don't think he doesn't like adulation, he is just as puffed up at the factory as the manufacturers."

"That's not true. It's only the Italians who flatter him, but he doesn't like it. They used to leave chickens on his porch because they thought that would help them keep their jobs but he stopped them."

I was surprised by El Isleno. No one had ever said a bad thing about my uncle, and I had always felt proud that he was a foreman in a factory with the power to hire and fire cigarmakers. If I believed El Isleno, I could no longer feel good that he was a foreman, and, therefore, important in Ybor City. I would lose importance in my own eyes if I lost such belief. One knows a lot about vanity when one is young.

"All right, all right, he is better than the others," El Isleno conceded. But he made me see the difference in behavior that existed among the cigarmakers in Ybor City. A foreman was always treated with friendliness wherever he went. The rough jibes that Spaniards cast at each other were never aimed at the two or three that came to *El Bien Publico*. When they came to the store they and their families, even their children, were never treated matter-of-factly. A stranger would not have noticed the difference, just as I, who had not known the life in the factories, was unaware of the subtle humiliation that was involved until El Isleno began to point out specific instances.

Why did no one say anything to Segunda when she walked through the store sampling vegetables and fruit? She was a greedy woman who covered her miserliness with banter and good humor. Before she arrived at the cash register with her purchases she usually had eaten a tomato, an apple, a banana; but that was never included in the bill she signed. Her husband was president of the cooperative but he did not really owe the dignified aura surrounding him to his position, nor to his dyspeptic manner. His brother had until about two years before been in general charge of one of the cigar factories. The brother was dead but an air of privilege still lingered about his family, and so Segunda could exercise her appetite with impunity.

WHEN I was not out with the truck I helped the women with their groceries, weighed their purchases and carried their bags up to the desk where the cash register and adding machine were. Segunda liked to have me along with her when she came to buy. She knew my family and she always made me tell her about them while she devoured the green peppers and plums.

In Ybor City one was taught when very young to ask about the health and well-being of the family of whomever one met, and every encounter was ended by each asking the other to be remembered to their respective families. This was a fine point in good behavior, and with this solicitude Segunda hid her scavenging while I helped her shop. Besides, young people were not to correct adults. She felt safe with me. I told El Isleno about her and he simply nodded his head: he did not insist when he saw I was learning his lessons.

That Saturday night Segunda and I made our little tour of the store, she eating and asking me questions and complimenting me, I being weighed down with bags. There were a lot of people in the store Saturday nights and she was safer from detection then than at other times. It seemed to me that she looked at the potatoes longingly and was a little resentful that they could not be eaten there.

When we arrived at the desk, she had eaten more than usual. Her husband was on duty at the register that night, and he began to add up the items on a machine. The procedure was to get the slip signed by the purchasing member for totalling later into a weekly bill. Segunda's husband was a very meticulous man. He always paused after he had punched each separate item and asked, "What else?"

"Two pears," I said when he repeated the ritual for his wife. Segunda's perpetual grin vanished.

"But they were samples!" she expostulated when her husband shifted his questioning stare from me to her.

"Did you eat them?" he asked. She grimaced, and he punched the adding machine.

"One apple," I said again before he totalled the list. He punched the machine again.

"Two plums," I told him, a little clearer-voiced this time. Segunda hurrumphed as the machine figured them in.

"What else?" This time her husband looked at me. Several other members were also looking and I was too excited to remember the banana with which she had begun.

"Come," El Isleno said to me loudly. "We have four boxes to deliver." He had been standing by, and I realized in that brief moment, when the aftermath of what I had planned was on me and I was lost as to what to do next, that I had done this because of him and for him. And that he was coming to my rescue. It was as if he were saying: you have done well, let me take over now.

We loaded the boxes of groceries in the truck quickly and in silence, but as soon as we drove away he smiled widely at me as I had never seen him smile before. Like a proud father. "They may fill your head with poison about Henry Ford at school," he said, "but you are going to be a good worker."

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UN: INTERIM REPORT

Watching the battle of Lake Success. Mr. Dulles goes in for real estate in a big way—without quotations from Charter or scripture.

By JOHN STUART

I DON'T suppose that it is a matter of large significance but in wandering through the huge rabbit warren housing the United Nations at Lake Success I was struck by the absence of the gray-enamelled lapel buttons. Back at Hunter College where the Security Council first met everyone wore the identification button with a noticeable pride. Delegates and clerks sported them while correspondents accepted them as a special badge of distinction. Now it is only the neophytes who feel that way; everyone else wears a look of weariness. The children who come on visitors' passes are seemingly the only cheerful faces in the endless maze of halls.

The early innocent enthusiasm has rubbed off. Eagerness has turned into routine duty. What goes on in the conference rooms has little tonic effect on those standing by and watching. I am not surprised, because one major activity at the UN these days is to subvert the things for which it was founded. This subversion has a way of communicating itself adversely to people on the outside while it hits those on the inside with special force. But the picture is not a dreary one for while there are those deliberately knifing the UN there are others who defend it, who keep to its principles. Yet if I gauge correctly the status of public opinion about UN it is not what it was when UN opened its doors to let a better world come in. And I also suspect that the bureaucracy which pervades the UN's operations does not help too much in keeping it the repository of hope.

I have watched the Americans work as well as the British and the Russians. The General Assembly committee meetings permit a considerable degree of intimacy between observer and observed. You can watch a delegate from a Latin American country jiggle his right foot for fifteen or twenty minutes and you feel that the man is reaching the point of exasperation. You know in no time, too, who are the dummies among the delegates—the stuffed shirts and the poseurs who hold down jobs without the slightest knowledge of the central issues confronting them. There are also those who bang on tables and bellow as though they were lost steers on a Texas plain. There are the smooth operators and there are the tough and strong-willed. At bottom, though, all of them, whatever their personal conference-room quirks, are the vehicles of government policies. They speak either on behalf of imperialism or against it, and in between there are gradations and shadings of thought. There are, in short, those who refuse to walk into the future, those who walk into it backward with their eyes sharply fixed on the past, those who boldly march forward.

Among the Americans there are the frauds, as well as the clever, and the obtuse. One or two of them are moved by an almsgiving humanitarianism. They speak with the kindness of the man or woman distributing turkeys to the poor on Thanksgiving. Their influence on major policy is decidedly limited, for the American delegation as a whole is neither philanthropic nor humanitarian. What characterizes the delegation at this point is that by and large it has quit moralizing. In the past, as I remember from reading their speeches, the American representatives at UN sessions rarely reached their point without first preaching a sermon. They often sounded as though they had just left a rousing Bible meeting and so lofty were their sentiments that I have more than once wondered how they managed to hide their wings.

Now our delegates have put their halos in storage. That eminent churchman, John Foster Dulles, refrains from citing scriptures when he demands parcels of real estate in the Pacific. He does not want much—just a few islands whose strategic positions command a million square miles of Pacific Ocean. They apparently belong in the American domain simply by right of conquest. Dulles not long ago quoted the Atlantic Charter as often as he did the Bible, but all that is in the past because for him to quote the Charter now would be to expose his own hypocrisy. The Charter expressly forbids annexation of territory, so it is kept on the dusty shelves and hauled down only for use against others.

Mr. Dulles, like Bernard Baruch, is also among those who want to poke into everyone else's affairs by demanding the right of inspection. He wants to inspect what arms other countries are making. He wants to send snoopers all over the place provided there are none on American property. This, of course, is an unabashed violation of the trusteeship provisions of the United Nations Charter. But it matters

Harari.

John Foster Dulles.

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little to Dulles and the American militarists who cooked up the whole scheme of placing the Japanese mandates, including Japanese territory, in the State Department's back pocket. The UN Charter makes it as clear as the sun at high noon that the UN has the right to investigate territory held in trusteeship to determine whether the territory is properly administered in the interests of the civilian population. Mr. Dulles, however, and the men for whom he is speaking want no outside interference. He is even ready to bargain for this exclusive privilege by letting the other empires, such as the British and French, have their way on trusteeship agreements. And just to make certain that not even the Security Council will exercise its jurisdiction over strategic areas held in trust Dulles proposes to reduce the veto power of the Council.

When I noted earlier that a major activity at the UN was to subvert the Charter I had Mr. Dulles in mind specifically. But I had something else in mind, too, for the American proposal on Pacific mandates proves how American imperialism is attempting to acquire for itself a territorial domain, which most Americans have always believed is alien to the American tradition. But Dulles has shown otherwise. Not only are we trying to tie an empire (which already includes Puerto Rico and the "independent" Philippines) to our dollar diplomacy but we are letting the military run the show and execute foreign policy. Last June President Truman asked Congress to give the brass hats a permanent place in making policy. To be sure it does not matter too much when a reactionary civilian policy fits neatly into the plans projected by the military. But again the American tradition has been to keep the military subordinate to the civilian agencies, with military authority deriving from the civilian. In many respects the positions now have been reversed—a reversal which creates new risks for the peace. Further, it is more than clear that the bases which Dulles demands in the Pacific are more offensive in character than defensive. They are far removed from our western shores and close enough to the Soviet Union so that there can be little question what their essential purpose is.

THE trusteeship issue as it has come up in the General Assembly meetings reveals that it will take a long and hard battle to make the empire powers do what in principle they agreed to do. The British are now attempting to rewrite the trusteeship provisions. No Trusteeship Council has as yet been established and British strategy is to delay its establishment as long as possible. A properly functioning Council will give many oppressed peoples a chance to live and breathe and assert themselves as an enormous force for progress. The Soviet representatives are waging a magnificent fight to keep the Charter from being converted into a chain around the necks of peoples in non-self-governing territory. Watching Ambassador Novikov state the Soviet position, particularly on Palestine, is to understand immediately why the Soviets are held in highest esteem throughout the colonial and mandated world.

I watched Field Marshal Smuts of South Africa attempt to abuse the Charter to annex the territory of Southwest Africa (about the size of Washington, Oregon and California combined). Smuts is an old bedfellow of Churchill's, more discreet but no less a tory. Abroad he is known as a man of "large vision" but at home the Africans would like nothing better than to be rid of his tyranny. South Africa is for the Africans an enormous concentration camp with the white ruling class trampling on the African's dignity. The African has no citizenship rights. There is no equality. Only thirteen percent of the agricultural land is allocated to over eighty percent of the population. Africans cannot engage in skilled labor. In short, the African is treated like a beast from the veldt.

To me the most dramatic illustration of the Smuts policies was the character of the South African delegation in the General Assembly. South Africa's population consists of about eight million Africans and approximately two million whites. Yet on Smuts' delegation there is not a single African. It is an all-white delegation. And Smuts would annex the territory of Southwest Africa, a former German colony mandated to the Union of South Africa at the close of World War I. The Soviet representatives called this attempt a flagrant violation of the United Nations Charter while other delegates, notably one from India, joined in the protest against incorporating territory into Smuts' white supremacy domain.

For all the fancy frills which embroider Smuts' speeches his efforts to annex Southwest Africa do not derive from any eagerness to develop the territory in the interests of its inhabitants. The history of his regime in South Africa is clear proof of that. Like any other expansionist Smuts is attempting to open markets in other parts of Africa, to gain a grip over areas enormously wealthy in minerals. One would think that Mr. Dulles would preach Smuts a sermon. But the American delegate was pleasantly mild in disagreeing with him. Not now, Dulles said in effect to Smuts, but perhaps some other time. This is not too strange in view of the fact that one annexationist will treat another with kindness and that American mining interests are depending on Smuts' good will. Large amounts of American capital are flowing into South African mining.

IN THIS interim report I cannot help but underscore the outstanding issue of Spain. The Security Council voted unanimously to allow the General Assembly to make recom-

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"There's probably some very simple explanation for all this."

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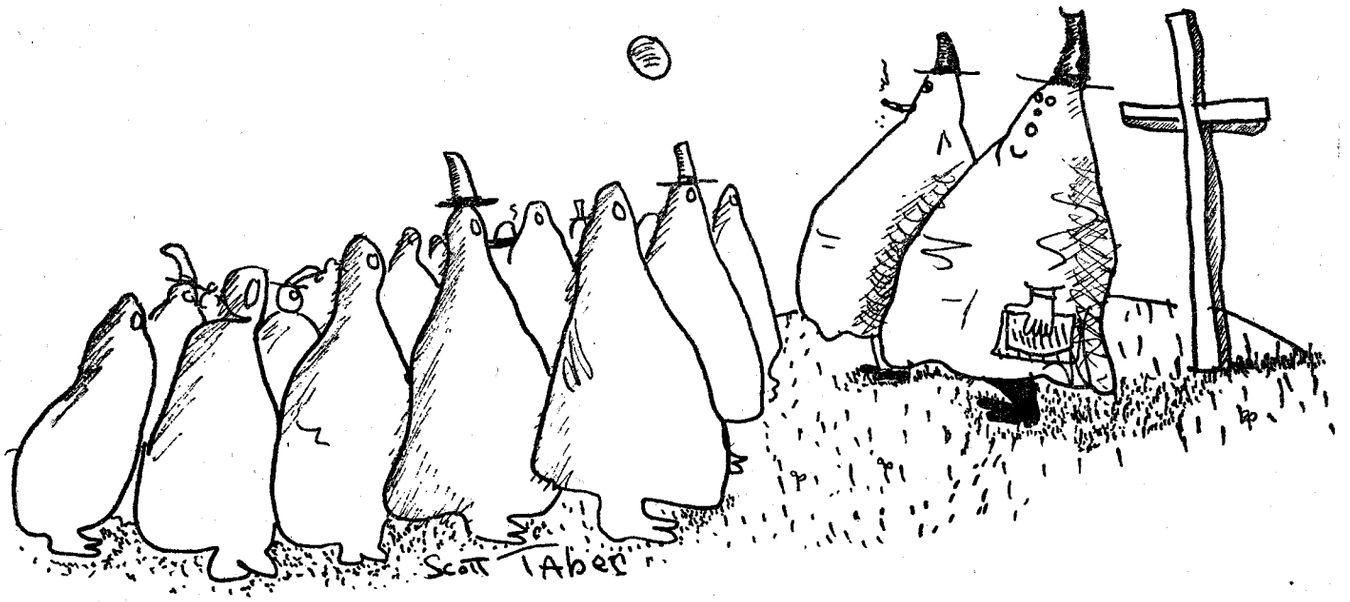

"Will Laundry Mark B-7993 please step forward?"

mendations for action and there is a Polish resolution pending within the Assembly calling on its members to break with Franco and to keep Franco Spain from joining any UN body. Outside the delegates' lounge I spoke with two members of the Republican government in exile. Their opinion was that Franco cannot last if the American delegation takes a forthright stand against him. In substance this is an accurate appraisal of the picture. For the Americans have adopted the tactic of talking a great deal and acting not at all. Words, however, never destroyed a tyrant. The British increase their trade with Madrid and the United States provides it with large quantities of war surplus materials. Presumably Franco cannot use these materials for military purposes but a great deal of the merchandise sold him becomes war material under a new coat of paint. I often wonder where Franco would be now if the State Department used against Franco a quarter of the energy and funds it expends to overthrow Tito.

The time has come to destroy Franco and to expose all those plans which count on letting him stay on until a new replacement is found to keep things in Spain as they are, albeit under a new auspices. Undoubtedly this is the main calculation in the British foreign office and in the State Department. Public opinion can no longer be satisfied by innocuous denunciation. There is too much backstairs intrigue and duplicity already. It can only be brought to an end by the widest and most relentless pressure on America's UN officialdom. Spain must be torn from the hands of the Nazi spy and returned to her people!

The UN can achieve this goal as it can achieve the others for which it was set up. Its shortcomings are many and they are for the most part attibutable to those delegations and groups who fear the consequences of abiding by the Charter both in letter and spirit. It does little good to hide the shortcomings. To speak of them openly, to criticize sharply is to thwart the UN's enemies.

SUNDAY IN CENTRAL PARK

By EARL COLEMAN

Her father carried tickets in his hand
And showed her in,
And leaned against the fence to watch her ride;
He said the spinning world was spin enough for him.
She chose a yellow horse and spread her dress against his side,
And didn't tie the safety strap
For that would have denied
All beauty and all flight.
Tattoo.
The drum-sticks battered her heart
And stuttered with excitement like the prelude of a dawn;
The horse that carried her had wings
So that they gently dropped and soared
And then they whirled away in music,
Up and never stopped,
They floated tumbling, twisting like the song
And then she laughed as if her heart would break
And like the wind in trees she whispered and she cried
With color and swift time—
The horse and she had snared the hot sun's axle-tree.
They stopped at last. It was not long.
The other people waited for their chance.
When she got down she recognized the place
And ran to him with tears and joy all jumbled in her face.
"We did not move," she cried,
"We flew and when we stopped we had been chained
And never moved an inch."
Her father dried her eyes and took her hand in his,
"It is the way with carousels, and Sundays too," he sighed.

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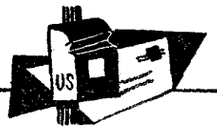

Paging Gropper

To New Masses: I have been going over the art work in the past few months' issues of NM and while closer attention bolsters the conviction that the current art work has a deeper and broader over-all effect than during the past five years that I've been getting NM, I still feel something lacking: Gropper. NM doesn't seem full to me without Gropper's work. With all credit for the welcome improvements in NM art content, there is still no one who has matched Gropper for the bigness of the humanity consistently impressive in his work. Let's hear from him or about him—but soon.

I am enclosing a check for eleven dollars for the New York Committee For Justice in Freeport. Since I am not certain that the committee is still at the address indicated in Canada Lee's letter in the August 20 NM, I am sending the check to you to be turned over to the committee wherever it may now be located. [*It is located at* 112 *E.* 19*th St., New York* 3, *N. Y.—Ed.*]

This money was raised at a jazz musicale at the home of Gene Deitch, an artist and jazz record collector. After he played varieties of traditional jazz music (New Orleans marches, vocal blues, work songs, spirituals and piano solos by Jimmy Yancey), I gave a brief talk on the social background of oppression and struggle wrapped up in this music and then I read Howard Fast's article, "Four Brothers and You" (from the April 2 NM), and Canada Lee's letter, bringing the subject up to date and orienting it toward active participation in the jazz tradition. Ten of us dug up eleven dollars. But we are ashamed of this pittance at the same time that we are proud of doing something about it, and we hope you can pass on the suggestion of having jazz musicales (not Glenn Miller-Tommy Dorsey jitterbug sessions, but Leadbelly-Woody Guthrie songs of real life), to raise more money for the Ferguson family.

Howard Feldman.

Los Angeles.

To New Masses: I am greatly puzzled by the sudden disappearance of Bill Gropper's cartoons from the pages of New Masses and I wonder what became of him.

G. Burnstein.

Morristown, Pa.

Since his vacation, Bill Gropper has been busy working on some paintings and has not been able to make his regular contribution to NM. We join Readers Feldman and Burnstein and many others who have asked about Gropper in hoping that he'll soon find it possible to reoccupy the unique place he created for himself in our pages.—The Editors.

The Poetry of Bodenheim . . .

To New Masses: In the October 22 NM there appears a rather belated review of my husband's *Selected Poems*, not "Collected Poems," as the review is erroneously labeled. I would appreciate the courtesy of answering this reviewer.

I must confess that I do not know David Silver either by reputation as a poet or a critic of poetry. However, his facile prose style could easily create some doubt in the mind of the average reader as to just what premise he is seeking to establish by his circumlocution.

Here and there, throughout his review, he is at some pains to reiterate that "Maxwell Bodenheim is a minor poet; his poetry is minor poetry." Brief sentences later, in a complete about-face, he emphatically contradicts himself when he declares "he displays an extraordinary sensitivity to both beauty and ugliness in American life and writes delicately about the one and with seething indignation about the other. And his poetry is never obscure. . . ." Then he presents the reader with a precious and highly questionable gauge of "great poetry," which "does not *persuade* the reader to share the poet's experience—it *compels* the reader to create the very same experience for himself so far as his own sensitivity permits." I am afraid that if this were true the great poetry of all ages would find few readers, a possible mere handful of rare, sensitive creatures capable of recreating for themselves the "poet's experience."

For the information of your readers, many of whom are sincere admirers of my husband's poetic work, Maxwell Bodenheim definitely *has not* "slowly slid back into the Bohemian morass." His later poetic work, far from being "strongly marked in meaning and in quality by this decline," shows the lucid, stabbing maturity of a poet who, since the beginning of his career, has been always a rebel and a fighter against an obsolete social order. His poetry will live as long as there are people to read poetry, and without the grudging assistance of critics, the majority of whom will pass unnoticed, who are literally outraged because Maxwell Bodenheim has dared, throughout a long lifetime, to be true to a social ideal, the core of which remains unchanged.

Grace Fawcett Bodenheim.

Brooklyn.

. . . and Aaron Kramer

To New Masses: "In this volume two poets build upon the same theme." So says Arthur Gregor in his November 5 article on Don Gordon's *Civilian Poems* and Aaron Kramer's *The Glass Mountain*. There is a tranquil and humble simplicity about this introductory statement of the critic, which has all the essence of considered, mature opinion. No one would dream of questioning such an unheated declaration.

The real fact, however, is that the two poets do not build upon the same theme, which your reviewer sets forth as "war, the poet's reaction toward the emotional and physical upheaval of war." Your reviewer mistakenly ascribes Gordon's literary intention to both Gordon and Kramer. The injustice to Aaron Kramer is as complete as the critic's basic misconception of *The Glass Mountain*.

An unwitting irony is introduced into the article when Mr. Gregor generously offers credit to Mr. Kramer for his "clarity and sincere desire to achieve understanding." While it is true that Kramer has these vital qualities, they would certainly not be important in a poet whose language itself was "not strong enough to sustain an emotion" or whose work (in an atomic age!) "achieves a certain value if it is considered nothing more than a fairy-tale in verse."

But this irony deepens when we consider that Kramerian clarity has just burst effulgent upon a reviewer who believes—and tries to persuade—that Kramer is "trying to draw analogies to war." Kramer is writing about capitalism, not about war. And he succeeds in this effort, on the whole.

If Kramer occasionally breaks the fine pattern of his long poem with a tawdry line (as the best poets are known to do), I believe it is away from the aims of literary criticism to misreport the proportions. It is even farther away from real criticism to select one of Kramer's obvious lapses from his generally strong poetic expression and present such a lapse as an example of "rhythmic fluency," which Mr. Gregor admits the poet possesses in marked degree. These, however, are comparatively small deviations from critical standards. It is abysmally far from a decent critical level to misconstrue the entire meaning of *The Glass Mountain*, making it a twin in subject-matter with Don Gordon's *Civilian Poems*.

Perhaps when Mr. Gregor started reading Kramer's *The Glass Mountain*, he put the book down to answer the doorbell, and when he got back to reading, he picked up the volume (which Beechhurst Press published in an upside-down novelty format) the wrong way, and finished his chore by rereading Gordon, all the while thinking it was Kramer!

It's too bad. I'm sure he would have enjoyed reading Kramer.

Michael Lorraine.

Brooklyn.

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review and comment

FROM THE BOOKSHELF

THUNDER OUT OF CHINA, *by Theodore H. White and Annalee Jacoby. William Sloane Associates. $3.*

IT HAS long been a truism that Henry Luce buys up the brightest young writers on the market, and that foreign correspondents for *Time*, *Life* and *Fortune* get more opportunities than the Navy to see the world. But it is also true that the high I.Q. of King Henry's team carries its own risks (for Henry). His young people get around and see things for themselves, and sooner or later some of them rebel against his Magna Charta: "You are free to write what you please, and I to print what I please." Among the earlier insurgents were John Hersey, Richard Lauterbach and Jack Belden. Now their ranks are joined by Theodore White and Annalee Jacoby, of *Time's* wartime Chungking Bureau, with an important book about China.

Thinking long bottled up is deepened, and it is clear that White and Miss Jacoby have done a lot of it. Their writing is full of striking formulations such as the following: "America's war [in the Pacific] had cut blindly across the course of the greatest revolution in the history of mankind, the revolution in Asia. . . . The war we fought against Japan was a war against the end result of a revolution that failed. . . . For generations it was customary to think that Japan had made a successful transition into the modern world and that China had failed. That was wrong. Japan's revolution failed within fifteen years of Perry's arrival in Tokyo Bay. It was seized by the feudal, reactionary-minded leaders . . . and twisted into . . . a society that could not solve its problems except by an aggression . . . by which it was doomed, [and that] bred disaster for everyone."

By contrast, say White and Jacoby: "The very chaos that has persisted in China for a hundred years has proved that the revolutionary surge of the Chinese people against their ancient unhappiness is too strong for any group to control and distort."

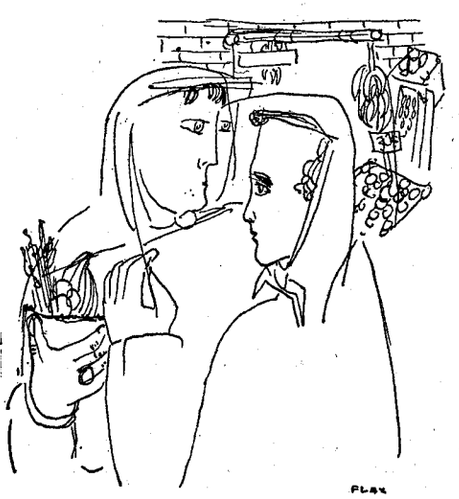
The rest of *Thunder Out of China* is a documentation in concrete facts and wartime experience of this thesis, and an appeal to Americans not to let their country stand in the way of history. The authors do not want the United States to apply the law at the end of a nightstick (or atom bomb), even in the name of "moral leadership." They respect the Chinese people. They are afraid for America, and for world peace, even more than they are for China, or of "chaos."

Chapter II of the book, entitled "The Peasant," is sufficient reason in itself to read the volume. This harrowing, incisive account of the plight of eight out of every ten people in China, and all Asia, is keynoted by the opening sentence: "The Chinese who fought this war were peasants born in the Middle Ages to die in the twentieth century." It disposes once and for all of the scholastic exercises of Dr. John Lossing Buck, the US agrarian "expert" who has obligingly concluded, to the endless satisfaction of Kuomintang propagandists, that the Chinese peasant is no more exploited than the American farmer. It also delivers a body blow to the sentimental labors of Pearl Buck and to confusionist "culture" fakers like Lin Yutang and Robert Paine, who have so long, and so lucratively, exploited the Shangri-La market. Without so much as mentioning their names, it may undo much of the "false and vicious" picture (the words are White's) drawn by professional whitewashers of feudalism.

In "The Peasant," White and Jacoby state that China is "perhaps the only country in the world where the people eat less, live more bitterly, and are clothed worse than five hundred years ago." While castigating Chinese reactionaries, they do not skirt the key responsibility of western imperialism for nurturing China's domestic oppressors and deepening the misery of her masses. Instead of falling for the currently fashionable evasions, they admit the facts, and show their basis.

The approach to America's past history in the East is also commendably clear-eyed. While the authors do not call US imperialism by its right name, they effectively dispose of the legend that all was fair in the garden until along came Hurley, and a sudden rush of wickedness to the head. The "Open Door" policy is stripped of noble verbiage and characterized as meaning "simply that China was 'open' to everyone but the Chinese," which with today's shift in world balances this reviewer would amend to read "open to nobody except the US monopolies." At the same time the positive aspects of the policy, which once impeded any one power from gaining control of China, are recorded.

Some interesting new light is shed on the 1944 line of Roosevelt, Stilwell and Gauss, an isolated sally in the right direction which departed from the record much more than the doings of Hurley and Wedemeyer. Parenthetically, Stilwell has received many tributes, such as White's and Jacoby's, from those who knew him and saw him in action, but this is not enough. "Uncle Joe" Stilwell's stand in China was in advance not only of the whole history of US policy, but of FDR's own wavering approach. White and Jacoby say truly that "Stilwell was ill-served by his public relations staff [which] saw the Old Man as a colorful lovable figure who could best be interpreted to the American people as . . . a cracker-barrel philosopher, a man of dry Yankee wit, a first-class fighting man." This picture obscured both the general's understanding of



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Chinese history and "his realization of the worth and dignity of every man." To rescue the memory of the mature Stilwell is a job that awaits the best progressive American writers, one that the people themselves and the American democratic tradition are waiting for.

Reactionaries will not like *Thunder Out of China's* approach to the problem of Soviet-American relations in Asia, in which the writers' respect for facts triumphed over some of their own prejudices. The Soviet policy of helping China to defend her national existence while scrupulously abstaining from interference in her internal affairs is repeatedly underscored—from the early aid against Japan, which came before anyone else got around to it, to the little known episode of Moscow's decisive rejection of the adventurer Sheng Shih-tsai's urgings that it annex Sinkiang; from Soviet support and encouragement of the Gauss-Stilwell policy to post-V-J Day neutrality in the Kuomintang-Communist conflict.

White and Jacoby do not understand the immunization of Manchuria as a war base, which they see only as destruction of industries. They have doubts concerning the Sino-Soviet Treaty. But along with their strictures, they point out that Russia's action "may be understandable" in view of the obscene alliance of the American military, Chiang's troops, the Japanese and former quislings in North China, which they brand mercilessly. "*Our policy*," say White and Jacoby, "has had the monstrous result of ranging Russia squarely against the United States in China" (italics mine—N.E.). While White and Jacoby are confused about the order in which remedial steps might be taken, their search is for modes of cooperation, not for camouflaged modest of conflict. They point to the ample common ground for such cooperation, say unequivocally that America's interest lies in one word, *peace*, and hammer at the thesis that in Asia there can be no peace without progress.

The foregoing is not to say that the book is without errors of detail, or general faults. White and Jacoby pay magnificent tributes to the Chinese Communists, then hastily mutter the humiliating required "Amen." Let no one suspect them of liking Communists or Marxism in general. The resulting tendency to present Chinese successes as good pragmatism triumphing over deplorable philosophy helps the understanding of neither writers nor readers. Also, although the co-authors do not suffer from the Luce ideology, there are vestiges of bad *Time* purple in their endless dwelling on the "stench" of starving "mobs" (with whom they sympathize and whose oppressors they attack), their references to "cold-blooded" Communist appreciation of historic forces, and their rather undignified babbling about how terrible, brutal, etc., revolutions must be, though this "ace" is immediately trumped with lurid descriptions of the infamies of the Kuomintang reaction. This evocation of rival terrors strikes an unworthy note of poltroonery against the background of their clear perception that the battle is between hope and death.

But the virtues of *Thunder Out of China* are more important. The Chiang Kai-shek regime and American intervention are exposed completely. The emphasis is on progress, United Nations unity and peace. It is good that many Americans, previously untouched by Asia's problems, will read this book, because its basic conclusions are both inescapable and timely.

NORMAN EBERHARDT.

Rat-Race

BRAVE NEW WORLD, *by Aldous Huxley. Harper.* $2.50.

SINCE the first publication of *Brave New World* in 1932, the Nazi murder camps, which reduced tens of thousands of victims to fertilizer, have endowed a part of Huxley's fantasy with terrible evidence of prophecy. Huxley himself, judging from his introduction, has learned very little from his fourteen-year seminar in contemporary history. He is still offering what seems to be only another form of insanity as a possible solution of the ills to which man has been heir.

The book is in the generic line that goes back to More's *Utopia*. With a difference. Where the Utopians have projected systems in which, by the proper application of right reason, man could be happy, Huxley sketches a period in the future where everyone is happy but where all the values we now accept have been lost. Happiness has become one of the root causes of a nightmare world.

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ent time would note certain changes. Everything and everyone is standardized, like a General Motors product. The inhabitants, all test tube products, are turned out on an assembly line where they are subject to various kinds of conditioning designed to produce either his Fordship, a Controller, or a Delta-Minus proletarian—one of a group of ninety-eight identical-twin moronic dwarfs created by the Bokanovsky process.

Everyone is very happy. Suggestion techniques, used during the infancy of these test tube products, create in all of them the feeling that it is better to be a Beta Minus than an Epsilon—or vice versa. If this groundwork doesn't always satisfy there are the "feelies"—an extension of the talkies with revolutionary effects; or "soma"—a drug that seems to be a cross between wheaties and cocaine; or sex-hormone chewing gum; or free love; or Orgy-Porgy, the religion of the One True Ford. And if you still aren't happy, they will pack you off to the Solomons or the Aleutians and let you have your misery in the company of other misfits where you won't contaminate anyone with it. The odor of contemporary civilization, eh?—this last.

So goes the world when into it comes a savage equipped only with the reactions of a primitive culture and a philosophy furnished by the only book he has read—the works of Shakespeare. He is faced with insanity or the lunacy of this new machine state. In reaching the inevitable conclusion, Huxley has a great deal to say about the horrors of happiness as a goal of society. Happiness is damned as the blind alley in which man must give up art, religion, love and responsibility. Similarly science, which Huxley sees as the Frankenstein monster of the modern world, is shown as an unmitigated evil responsible for the mass-produced lunacies of the world.

It seems a rather cheap and easy victory. Huxley has pictured an extreme kind of paternalistic fascism, but he ends up by striking imaginary blows at real enemies while at the same time attacking some of the things which are the basis for any kind of valuable social change. Certainly at the time the book was written, fascism in Italy and even Germany was real enough to make it unnecessary for Huxley to invent his horrors. And while the kind of happiness found in his new world is that of the dope fiend, only a fool, a cynic or a reactionary can confuse it, as Huxley does, with such things as better working conditions and more leisure time. He apparently feels that the workers—like the morons of the Bokanovsky groups—are incapable of anything higher than physical sensations. The loftier feelings—one assumes—are the property of superior beings.

As for science—Huxley, in his introduction, talks of making it serve man instead of the reverse. Marxists will certainly agree with him at this point. But when he assumes that the only possible result of science is the nightmare civilization he has outlined, we must disagree. There is no reason why it must always be perverted by the lords of surplus value.

The kind of feeling we have indicated above is a paradigm of the work. The book begins as a spirited and witty attack on fascism and capitalism, but nowhere indicates a real understanding of these phenomena, and the writer shortly shifts his grounds to attack even the idea of progress. We are left the choice of the savage—either the old world with all its rottenness but with the "grandeur" of moral responsibility, or his "new world," the rat-run of standardization and soma.

It is the dilemma of the bourgeois liberal who fears equally the loss of his individuality under capitalism and the loss of his class privileges in a socialist society. But he must make either that choice or the choice of the savage, and deny the idea of progress altogether, an attitude as common among twentieth century intellectuals as was its reverse among those of the nineteenth. The alternative of socialism Huxley rejected long ago when one of his characters—a "revolutionist"—confessed that of the revolution he expected only a process which would create a petty bourgeois out of a proletarian. In other words, Huxley can sympathize with the worker while he is oppressed, but is afraid of the same worker as part of a ruling proletariat.

EVEN Huxley cannot stand still, however. The lunacy-insanity dilemma which amused the "Pyrrhonic esthete" of 1932 has given place to the earnest social uplifter who has decided that there is a way out after all. Huxley's real utopia would be a community in which "economics would be decentralist and Henry-Georgian, politics Kropotkinesque and cooperative.

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Science and technology would be used as though, like the Sabbath, they had been made for man, not (as at present and still more so in the Brave New World) as though man were to be adapted and enslaved to them. Religion would be the conscious and intelligent pursuit of man's Final End, the unitive knowledge of the immanent Tao or Logos, the transcendent Godhead or Brahman. And the prevailing philosophy of life would be a kind of Higher Utilitarianism, in which the Greatest Happiness principle would be secondary to the Final End principle—the first question to be asked and answered in every contingency of life being: 'How will this thought or action contribute to, or interfere with, the achievement, by me and the greatest possible number of other individuals, of man's Final End?' "

With this statement, Huxley has completed the circle he began with his first novels. There he rejected, along with faith in the nineteenth-century notion of orderly progress and an optimistic view of science as man's best instrument, any kind of belief in the ultimate salvation of man on any level. Subsequently he was to reargue the problem of ends and means with a great deal of skill and truculence, arriving, as might have been predicted, at the usual dogma that the method used to achieve an objective will color and qualify the objective itself. His problem then became one of seeking out the pure tools for the construction of the City of God. His statement is a catalogue of the tools he has selected.

Why did Huxley choose these particular "tools" rather than others? Probably because their "higher utilitarianism" is synonymous with almost total *lack* of utility. Leaving out the mysticism of the "Final End principle," the Henry-Georgian economics of the "single tax" is essentially only a middle-class protest against monopoly; and Kropotkin's philosophical and aristocratic anarchism, except insofar as its cooperation is given a new content by socialism, is surely no longer dynamic. The purity of these tools, for Huxley, probably consists in their not being used any longer. One sees, then, that the crowning affirmation in Huxley's credo is based upon what appears to be a thoroughly unsound substructure and we may assume that, despite his present yea-saying, he is still afflicted with a radical pessimism which in his later novels he can only overcome by an act of faith. His pessimism, in other

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words, is recapitulated on a "higher level." It has a new "content" and it is now concealed. But it is still there.

Curiously, the economic and political gods which Huxley invokes are taken from the nineteenth century which he had rejected earlier. Although these ideas are long gone into the big night of history, Huxley's present position is better than when he wrote *Brave New World*. To those who have read his recent novels, however, the difference may appear to be only tactical, and one may assume that Huxley will go on looking for that Final End in the Orgy-Porgy of his intellectual Holy Rollerism rather than take on his shoulders any of the responsibility for the social change which history requires of us today.

THOMAS MCGRATH.

For All Two Hundred

FOR ALL MANKIND, *by Leon Blum. Viking. $2.50.*

THESE are the reflections of a Frenchman written in 1942 while he was in the prisons of the Vichy government and later in the Nazi concentration camp of Buchenwald. Leon Blum has been for more than two decades the outstanding leader of the French Socialist Party. One asks immediately: did imprisonment have any profound effect on his political thinking? Have his harsh experiences taught him to reevaluate the meaning and doctrine of French Social Democracy?

The answer is only too clear: Blum remains a Social Democrat through and through. In political terms, he is still following the line that led him, at critical junctures in France's peacetime history, to adopt or submit to a policy framed by the 200 families.

This is patently clear from his frequent references to the Soviet Union. The USSR is, for instance, a "despotic autarchy": and he wrote this while the army and peoples of the Soviet Union were turning the tide of World War II with their embattled defense of Moscow and their epic victory at Stalingrad. Indeed, Blum goes even further. He trots forth many of the typical slanders of the right-wing Social Democrats—for example, the Communazi calumny, a stock-in-trade of right-wing Social Democrats in every country.

But it is in discussing the role of the French Communist Party that Blum becomes most explicit. That party is to him "not an internationalist, but a foreign, nationalist party." Is the lie any less reprehensible in that it comes from a "Socialist" leader imprisoned by the Nazis, and not from the pen of a big business Red-baiter?

Fortunately the French people have learned from events. They see increasingly in the French Communist Party a bulwark of French democracy, progress and freedom: they repeat with the late Paul Vaillant-Couturier: "We continue France!" The party of Thorez, Cachin and Duclos sacrificed 75,000 of its sons and daughters in the French resistance movement. Over 1,000,000 strong today, the Communists have enlisted the best elements in French labor and intellectual life.

Even among the Socialists, Blum's ideas have met with setbacks. At the recent national conference of the French Socialist Party held several months ago, Blum the right-wing Socialist was in a clear minority, outvoted on every major issue by the younger, more progressive representatives of his party. But this should surprise no one. Discussing a constitution for a "renovated France," Blum wrote that he wanted one "along American or Swiss lines." Blum, the bourgeois Socialist, remains logical to the very end. Remember the maxim about the bourbons "who learned nothing and forgot nothing"?

JOHN ROSSI.

Patriot$

SHADOW OVER THE LAND, *by Charles Dwoskin. Beechhurst Press. $2.75.*

"SHADOW OVER THE LAND" is a first novel by Charles Dwoskin, a young Brooklynite recently returned from two-and-a-half years in the maritime service. It is the story of the rise of a fascist veterans' organization in New London, Connecticut, although —as the author notes—it might have been Rochester, Tucson or Oakland.

Dwoskin studies the organization through its effect on the lives of a lower middle-class New London family, the Flemings. Eventually the town's Democratic Community Council triumphs over "Patriots United!" and its cynical, racketeer leaders. The book suffers from the lack of a protagonist strong enough to permit the author to place the problems raised by the existence of such an organization

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in other than idealist terms of "decency" and "indecency."

But Dwoskin succeeds in handling some aspects of his theme where others have failed. He has a genuine feeling for his Fleming family, a feeling which accounts, in terms of their own confusion, for the manner in which otherwise "decent" people are involved in "indecent" activities. There are passages in which he develops his material with mature skill.

The dialogue, however, is weak, used too often for exposition rather than as a means of carrying forward the story line. The book's frequent use of literary biology has brought the Boston censors down on it. But Dwoskin's theme is an important one and today, when the average publisher leans over backward to avoid the facts of present-day life, there should be a welcome for this first novel.

I. J. WALKER.

NON-COMMERCIAL FILMS

THE last decade has seen a marked advance in the use of 16-millimeter films. In England and Canada the government has been using this type of film to spread information on housing, public health, accident control, etc. During the war, of course, all countries used it for instruction in civilian defense tactics and for building morale for its armed forces. In Canada, where commercial producers do not exist, the only film production is the government program of 16mm documentary films. Not affected by the considerations that shape the judgments of private film companies, the Canadian Film Boards, at present in the hands of honest and competent men, select subjects that rarely get a look-in among the Hollywoods of the world.

In this country, the 16mm film has had a less felicitous career. Its production has been largely in the hands of big business, which has been turning out what are commonly referred to as "sponsored" films. Before the war, four or five movie companies specializing in these sponsored, or commercial, documentaries, with headquarters in Detroit and Chicago, numbered among their clients the largest companies in oil, auto, rubber, steel, auto accessories and the like. Such clients earmarked hundreds of thousands of dollars annually for their movie programs.

The purpose of these films, naturally, was and is to beguile the public with the superior beauties of a given can opener, tea bag or automobile. While cooking up these blandishments, the movie invariably presents management as unfailingly considerate and the workers as extremely contented. In these films, the machines are always clean and gleaming, while the interiors of the factories are models of hygienic achievement. Often clean smocks are hired to dress up the workers for a particular sequence, and then whipped out of the factory on the double, lest anybody get that pampered feeling. Of course nobody has to bat a local Chamber of Commerce over the head with the propaganda value arising from such benign capital-labor relations, and the films are enthusiastically shown in schools, churches and other community centers around the country. Sometimes, when the hand of the company is not too blatantly obvious, or when the film is made in technicolor, it gets put into 35mm size and is distributed in the regular neighborhood movie houses.

Unions and progressive groups have only lately, and with regrettable slowness, come to appreciate the value of 16mm films. During the last Roosevelt campaign the Democratic Party, under the urgings of its most alert section, made one single film on the election issues. One union, the United Auto Workers-CIO, made a campaign film, *Hell Bent For Election.* This year again only one union thought enough of the medium to use it for getting its message to the voters. I refer to the excellent film *Deadline For Action,* made by the CIO's United Electrical Workers. Progressive individuals occasionally make films that combat anti-Semitism or sing the praises of the democratic way of life, but when such films are insufficiently supported their makers turn to more lucrative works.

Here and there honest companies in the field struggle valiantly to survive. Such a one is Julian Bryan's In-

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ternational Film Foundation, which has produced films on Polish social customs, the development of children under the Soviet system and other subjects calculated to increase international amity and understanding. Occasionally Brandon Films, a New York distributing agency for 16mm films, manufactures a labor film, as does the film center of the International Workers Order. But obviously the sum total of all this activity is scarcely a match for the spate of commercial 16mm films mentioned above, or the stream of films that will soon emerge from the Vatican-sponsored program announced not long ago.

THE recent formation of two 16mm exhibiting companies may prove to be a valuable stimulus in the further production of adult films. One of these, the One World Film Association, has already begun to show programs publicly (in conjunction with the IWO Film Center) at the Provincetown Theater in New York. While these programs can be improved, they indicate the limitless possibilities of theme and idea in the field. The bill is changed every Wednesday, and I pick five films at random to indicate the variety and richness of the Association's repertoire.

Painters of Quebec is the third of a series dealing with the artists of Canada. While this one is on the tearoom level of discussion—art is lovely and all artists are romantic—the previous films in this series attempted to sketch the social background of the painter, along with some analysis of his work. The importance of this series, however, is that the Canadian documentary film-makers feel that a discussion of art is a proper subject for motion pictures.

Perhaps the most significant item on the program is a two-reeler on Negro and white relations. With a frankness that Hollywood has never equalled, *The Color of a Man* shows that backwardness among Negroes is not an inherent racial characteristic but is attributable to the shameful neglect and exploitation they face. Several sequences deal with the the more fortunate Negro in this country who acquires an education and lives in a healthy environment. Under such circumstances Negroes become doctors, educators and scientists equal to those of any other group.

This film is the first and only documentary that speaks up so strongly for Negro and white equality. The American Missionary Society, which produced it, makes a real contribution to racial harmony. The weakness of the film however, is the weakness of this group's outlook. Just as it talks of building hospitals in Puerto Rico without examining the causes that lead to sickness among the natives, so here too it pleads for equal opportunities for Negroes without examining the social causes that impede this. However this film makes for an excellent beginning, one that must lead eventually towards frank film discussions of Jim Crow and how to get rid of it.

Others films include *Chants Populaires,* an animated treatment of two French-Canadian folk songs, done with freshness and charm; *The Glass Bell,* that warns Joe Doakes that reaction is not dead and that it must be fought. *Deadline For Action* is trimmed down and edited for use after the election. This labor film is easily the most hard-hitting and outspoken of all. It shows how inflation robs the worker of his small wage gains. It proves with heartening clarity that big business lowers labor's standards, that it controls domestic and international policy, and that all of these activities aim for fascism.

It is important, of course, that these programs be supported, but even more important, whether you live in New York or elsewhere, is the fact that all these films are available for immediate use. The films cannot be made without your help. I have heard people, repelled by the usual commercial "entertainment" pictures, wonder why nothing was ever done to counteract them with 16mm films. Well, it takes money to produce and distribute enlightened movies. So if you think something should be done to offset the reactionary, commercial and special-interest films, then get in touch with the International Workers Order Film Center at 80 Fifth Avenue, in New York. If they do not have a print of a particular film on hand, they will know where to get it.

JOSEPH FOSTER.

RECORDS

THE Second Rachmaninoff Piano Concerto is one of those works which audiences have always liked better than critics. It satisfied the public's healthy desire for an epic, human and extrovert experience in music, even if the structural devices it employed were borrowed from Tschaikowsky, and offered no new ideas to composers. Artur Rubinstein, accompanied by the NBC Orchestra under Vladimir Golschman, has a good time, as any pianist must, with its sweet melodies and pianistic sonorities (Victor M-1075).

One of the most interesting developments of recent recording has been the attention given to children's music. One test is suggested to parents looking for good records. It is to choose works that, so far as possible, make musical and literary sense to the parents themselves. If a record sounds infantile to an adult, it is not fit for a child. Adult entertainment can of course be too complex for a child, but there is a difference between a heartfelt simplicity which both adult and child can enjoy, and deliberate infantilism.

A case in point is Prokofieff's "Peter and the Wolf," which was conceived with children in mind, but treated them with respect and was written on the highest level of good sense in story and music. For this reason, it had a profound influence for good on children's music. One of the better recent sets is "Jack and Homer," by George Kleinsinger and Paul Tripp, who also wrote "Tubby the Tuba." It is far from the Prokofieff standard, but avoids treacle, and is musically well written and performed (Arrow, AC-51). Another set, not especially meant for children but which they can take with pleasure, is Richard Dyer-Bennet's Ballads, which includes such folksong favorites as John Peel and Molly Malone (Stinson, S-364).

Joe Sullivan combines a right feeling for the blues and rag folk material of jazz with a keen intelligence that gives every one of his piano performances a clean, economical rounded-out form. The "Joe Sullivan Quartet Album" presents three sides in which he is accompanied only by his own foot tapping, with three sides in which he plays a driving, trumpet-like lead for Sidney Bechet's powerful soprano sax. Joining the ensemble are George Wettling on drums and Pops Foster on bass. Under the loving but imaginative treatment these players provide, tunes like "Fidgety Feet," "Sister Kate," "Panama" and the basic blues emerge new and fresh in every note. (Disc 701.)

S. FINKELSTEIN.

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Where Do We Go?

(*Continued from page* 14)

nominally backing the Mead-Lehman ticket, echoed the GOP's anti-Communist frenzy, was given a fitting brushoff: its vote dropped even more than that of the Democrats, the Liberal Party polling only 53 percent of its 1944 total.

The Communist Party in New York gave critical and qualified support to the principal candidates of the labor-progressive alliance. In this way and by nominating its own candidates for two secondary state offices, it strengthened the independent forces and the movement for a political realignment that must eventually find its proper channel in a new anti-monopoly, people's party. The Communists' work in the election also advanced the struggle for socialism as the way to end the poverty, exploitation and war that are endemic in this barbarous outworn system. The Communist candidate for attorney general, Councilman Benjamin J. Davis, Jr., received about 95,000 votes—double the party's 1942 vote and more than half that polled by the heavily financed, much-publicized Liberal Party.

The Republicans will try to get the most out of their victory. "The most" does not inevitably mean fascism—at this time even the Wall Street camarilla does not yet find that necessary or feasible—but it means a good deal of grief for the American people, as is already indicated in Senator Ball's proposal for new anti-labor legislation. And President Truman in his post-election statement has expressed his desire to walk arm in arm with this cutthroat gang—or shall we say respectfully behind them?—on domestic issues as he has for many months on foreign policy. But the American people are not without means to defend themselves and to reverse the results in 1948. Though Herbert Hoover accurately describes the GOP as "the party of the Right," he lies when he declares that the people have repudiated the road they traveled under Roosevelt.

For Marxists and other progressives the fight to ram that lie down the throats of the Republican bosses and the tory Democratic handymen has just begun.

In a concluding article next week Mr. Magil will discuss strategy and tactics for the future.

William Gropper

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